THE HERMITAGE OF DU' MONTE;

A BRITISH STORY.

[By William Hutchinson.]

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PREFACE.

THE following ſheets were wrote by a gentleman reſpectable for his knowledge in the uſeful and ornamental parts of life. The work, in general, inculcates reſignation to the will of Heaven, filial reverence, and univerſal love.

THE EDITOR.

ERRATA.

Page 7.	line 1.	—omit "who"
16.	1.	—for "round" read "veind"
43.	5.	—for "projecting" read "projection"
55.	10.	—for "every" read "A"
87.	7.	—for "green" read "given"
127.	3.	—for "Unveil'd" read "Veild"
136.	9.	—Omit "As"
166.	7.	—for "goes" read "goeſt"
172.	13.	—for "their" read "there"
174.	7.	—for "Wilder" read "Milder"
175.	9.	—for "Nereides" read Niades"
198.	4.	—for "Oppreſſing" read "oppoſing"
256.	3.	—for "All all" read "theſe are

THE HERMITAGE.

POSSESSED of an ancient family eſtate, Periander dwelt in a village, exerciſing thoſe virtues, which render a man happy in himſelf, and a bleſſing to his fellow creatures.

PROVIDENCE had made him the father of an only ſon, whoſe excellencies at once indulged the warm-

eſt of his parental wiſhes, and promiſed to the world a happy ſucceſſor to Periander, whoſe grey hairs approached the grave.

The firſt veſtiges of the Reformation had not taken place in this kingdom; yet Periander, from a mind enlarged with learning and benevolence, had embraced certain principles diſſenting from the Romiſh church.

In the neighbourhood of the village ſtood a monaſtery, the chief of which

which an eccleſiaſtic, who, from the contracted habits of his education, had hardened his ſoul with every ſeverity of ſuperſtition. His meagre tall figure, was made lean by a mind of anxiety, and his pale viſage and hollow eyes, expreſſed avarice and envy. He had acquired a bigotry of principle, from example rather than judgement; his monaſtic learning not advancing his charity, had furniſhed him with cenſures and condemnations; and his averſions were more generally exerciſed than his compaſſion.

ARBITRARY in his principles, ſo was Father Peter arbitrary in his manners. The inſolence of the church enflamed his boſom, and zeal for peculiar modes extinguiſhed that eſſence of religion, univerſal love. To depart from Father Peter's precepts, was to ſin without meaſure; and, amidſt a thouſand good actions, and a life of uninterrupted benevolence, Periander acquired the hatred and enmity of the ghoſtly Father.

FATHER

FATHER Peter, who, from his holy office, might be conceived to be an imitator of the God whom he ſerved; whoſe life, being totally abſtracted from the cares of the world, was ſuſtained in luxury by the hands of the labourer; whoſe religious zeal offering to the Deity through his miniſters, ſtored the cloiſter with the tenths of all his fruits; poſſeſſed of abundant leiſure to indulge his ſtudy of the Divinity through all his works; might we not have hoped, that ſuch a man would have armed himſelf againſt the

the powers of ſatan, and have governed the impetuous ardour of human paſſions, correcting them with true religion: But ſo far from modulating the ſallies of the ſoul with piety and virtue, wrath and perſecution were the weapons which were wielded by his conſecrated hands.

The influence which the religious had over families, their ſecret intercourſe, and the rigorous mode in which they ſuſtained their arbitrary authority, gave Father Peter many

many opportunities of inſtigating miſchief on his neighbour. His blind bigotry induced him to think, that, in diſtreſſing one who diſſented from the church of Rome, he rendered eſſential ſervice to the God of all; through zealous frenzy he deviſed a thouſand treacheries, and a thouſand ſnares to oppreſs and injure Periander.

THE Seigniory was Lord Melvil's, where Periander's lands lay; he held them by Knight's ſervice. To this Lord, the treacherous prieſt addreſs'd himſelf;

himſelf; and, from a forged inſtrument, alledged to be recorded amongſt the rolls and legends of the monaſtery of St Benedict, he induced him to proſecute a claim to the eſtates of Periander. The ſecret engines from monaſtic emiſſaries were ſent abroad; the ignorant, deluded through their blindneſs into zeal, were prepared as witneſſes to evidence whatever they might be prompted to.

Periander, already enervated with age, his ſoul untoned, his judgement

judgement relaxed, and his mind ſmoothed into that divine compoſure, which bleſſes the good man in his old age, as the harbinger of his diſſolution; received theſe acts of oppreſſion without dread: He confided in the God of juſtice, and ſmiled at the devices of his enemies: But too late he perceived, that the workers of iniquity were not always corrected by the inſtant hand of interpoſing Providence. He was at length alarmed with the reality of his danger; his paternal boſom felt apprehenſions for his ſon; his age

was

was disturbed in the midst of its infirmities, and the hand of care grasped at his fainting soul.

PERIANDER did not long sustain the shock, he sunk into the arms of death. With filial devotion, his beloved son Astianax laid him in the vault amidst his ancestors.

ASTIANAX, called from his travels by his father's approaching fate, an utter stranger to the enmity and stratagems of Father Peter, took possession of his inheritance: The contest

conteſt ſtill went on. Some little time preceding the day of trial, Aſtianax had retired into the gallery of his manſion, to meditate on the poſture of his affairs, and conſider the nature of Lord Melvil's claim. As he walked penſive to and fro, on a ſudden, at the further end of the gallery, he heard a claſh of armour: Turning haſtily, he obſerved the buckler and ſhield to ſhake, which once his great anceſtor Norban wore; and in which, in Paleſtine, he teſtified his valour o'er the Saracens. At firſt, he regarded the e-

vent as accidental, and purſued his melancholy walk: But hearing the ſound again, he perceived the coat of mail to tremble on the crooks where it hung, the helmet nodded, and the gauntlet moved as if it beckoned him.—This is no common circumſtance, cries he, What is it that diſturbs theſe arms, which, with their owner, long have been at reſt. He aſcended a few ſteps, and begun to handle the armour, when he diſtinguiſhed, within the breaſt-plate, a light, like the faint rays which glow

glow worms shed within the shadowy bower at eventide. Advancing further, he discovered, that the beams proceeded from a small onyx cross, which hung concealed by the armour, suspended in a golden chain, from the collar. The unexpected acquisition threw him, for a moment, into surprise. Strange it is, thought he, that such a gem should remain for seven ages undiscovered by his forefathers; a gem so rare, that, in its composition, it excelled all he had ever seen. It was, as the onyx stone, shadowy,

and round, and variegated; but around it was diffuſed a livid light; on its parts were various engravings, of myſterious or emblematical characters, appearing like the Egyptian devices, repreſenting the attributes of the God of nature. A ſudden propenſity led Aſtianax to place the chain upon his neck. Soon as the amulet had touched his boſom, from every point of the croſs, there fell warm drops of blood; and, with a horrid clangour, the armour ſhook in every joint! Surpriſe now changed to fear. Have I, ſays he, with ſacri-

legious

legious hands, polluted this fair gem? and is the ſpirit of the mighty Norban offended at my raſhneſs? Again the armour ſhook! Theſe uncommon appearances encreaſed his amazement; as, if danger was near, he laid his hand upon his ſword, and, looking around, ſeemed to expect an enemy. His enemy was there! The inſatiable eccleſiaſtic, not being content with the ſlow progreſs of the laws, in the oppreſſion of Aſtianax, and not being appeaſed by the death of the good Periander; but taking advantage of

the liberty which theſe times of bigotry afforded to the churchmen, he paſt through the apartments of the houſe uninterrupted, and ſought the heir of Periander in his retirement, to accompliſh his infernal purpoſes by his aſſaſſination. The bleſſed ſpirits of thoſe who have left this life, remain our guardian angels; and, till this globe by fire ſhall be refined into a heaven for men, they hover in the upper atmoſphere, where light alone fills the expanſe, and ride above the watry vapourous veil which circumvades this planet: There

There they behold whate'er betides their kindred ſouls on earth: From whence, deſcending to our aid, as each emergency advances, far as ſuch refined beings, ſpirits of heavenly mould, can move the dull and drowſy ſenſes of our earthly form, they influence our will, or check our wiſh, or turn our raſh reſolve; by touch ſo delicate, that we, amidſt the inſpiration, know not how or why we paſs between our purpoſe and the event: Their form is alſo pure, that, to our ſight, the ſpirits riding on the beams of light, eſcape

the

the ſenſe, like colours, till they paſs on mediums which are attuned to the dullneſs of man's nature; ſo, when they would conduct us from perils eminent, or to the fair poſſeſſions of proſperity, they aſſume ſome form terreſtrial, to miniſter to us their more peculiar care.

THE approach of Father Peter, at firſt, ſtruck Aſtianax with apprehenſion; but, on recollection of his holy office, and of his public name for godlineſs and rigid virtue, his fear ſubſided: Yet, not knowing why,

why, he ſtill retained his hand upon his ſword. The ghoſtly father, in his boſom hid the dagger which he brought to ſhed Aſtianax's blood. With a ſolemn look of ſanctity, he addreſs'd the youth in language culled from all the ſtore of baſe hypocriſy, firſt diſciplined in dark monaſtic ſchools. With ſeeming tears he ſpoke of Periander; and, croſſing his breaſt, prayed for his departed ſpirit. He ſighed, and talked of all the anceſtry of young Aſtianax, and called on ſaints to lead him in the paths of his forefathers.

Forth

Forth he ſtretched his hand to bleſs him; and from his ſword the unſuſpicious youth was ready to withdraw, to claſp the monk within his boſom, where his ſoul rebounded with the fervour of his reverence and love to thoſe of whom he ſpoke. In that inſtant the armour ſhook! Alarmed by the repeated ſound, Aſtianax ſtepped back! The noiſe had touched the eccleſiaſtic's ear; and, with emotions not to be expreſſed, he felt unuſual terrors ſeize his ſoul! The crucifix upon the boſom of Aſtianax again let fall freſh

tears

tears of blood; and, fixed with earneſt and involuntary graſp, his hand remained upon his ſword. Various paſſions wandered on his features. The monk long uſed to look upon the face of thoſe he dealt with, there to diſcover, from that undeceiving index, the ſentiments which agitate the ſoul, fixed a ſteady gaze upon the youth, wondering to behold a luſtre beam o'er all his aſpect, ſuch as zealots fancy to their patron ſaints. His dark reſolves were ſhaken! Aſtianax, thus upon his guard, rendered the monk's enterpriſe impracticable.

The

The ſhaking of the armour was ſupernatural. Conſcious evil filled the guilty mind of Father Peter with terrors and ſelf-condemnation. His ſoul let go its bloody purpoſe, and, for a moment, relaxed into remorſe; but for a moment only: For the ſucceeding thought turned on a future time to execute his project.

During the ſhort time in which theſe few ideas moved within the mind of the eccleſiaſtic, Aſtianax and he ſtood motionleſs and ſilent; the monk gazing on the youth, and the

the youth, with eyes uplifted, fixed on the armour. Peter broke ſilence, and, arming his boſom with the tokens of the croſs, he called upon the ſacred name of God to bleſs and ſanctify him; that he might avoid the ſnares and wiles of thoſe infernal beings which poſſeſſed this manſion, and the frenzy'd ſpirit of Aſtianax. Amidſt this ejaculation, with uplifted eyes and hands, he turned to quit the chamber; when, behold, the looſened garment let the weapon paſs, and at his feet the naked dagger dropt! This was the hour of

wonder to Aſtianax! He ſcarce gave credit to what he ſaw; his aſtoniſhed mind could not form one conjecture, wherefore the good, the pious monk, wore in his boſom this dire inſtrument. Confounded in the event, the monk, in haſte, paſs'd on, not noticing the matter, but apprehending, that hence the youth would take the alarm, and ever, in his preſence, be on his guard.

Soon as Aſtianax had recollected himſelf from his ſurpriſe, he ſtooped to take the dagger up; when he beheld

beheld the onyx ſending forth more brilliant rays, than when he firſt perceived it on the breaſt-plate of his anceſtor: He drop'd upon his knee, and, holding forth the glowing amulet, thus he poured forth his thoughts.

"Most glorious relick of my ſire
"great Norban, do I not apprehend
"thy ineſtimable value, and thy
"wonderous qualities! Whilſt ſuſ-
"pended on my boſom, thy virtues
"can preſage the unforeſeen ap-
"proach of danger, and the ad-

" vancing changes to prosperity. Thy
" bloody tears foretel that hazard
" is not far behind, and thy lustre
" blazeth forth, to proclaim the
" footsteps of serenity and peace.
" O ye blessed manes of my depart-
" ed ancestors, if ye behold the
" last remains, this single personage
" of your illustrious blood, with
" eyes of approbation; and, with
" angelic love, guard me from pe-
" rils and the wiles of Satan; be
" present to my soul in all its reso-
" lutions; and so inspire me with
" the love of honour, that I may
" emulate

"emulate your glorious deeds, and "imitate your virtuous lives; and "when my regenerated ſpirit ſhall "leave this vale of ſin and ſorrow-"fulneſs, to meet you on the wings "of light; may I be eſteemed de-"ſerving of your approbation, and "adjudged worthy to be enrolled by "the recording angel, in the illu-"ſtrious table of your genealogy "in heaven."

THE monk retired into his ſecret cell, and there, inſtead of devoting his meditations to religious proſ-

pects, his temporal ambition and rapacious avarice, led him to form new plans for the deſtruction of Aſtianax. Lord Melvil was a man, whoſe early life was diſſolute and vicious; every degree of faſhionable error was familiar to him; in his laſciviouſneſs, he ruined half his vaſſals; in his ebriety, he maſtered the Herculean cup of Alexander; in him, ignorance begat obſtinacy; his reſentment was inſatiate; his will was arbitrary; and his whole demeans groaned under his authority. Age and diſeaſe had weakened his faculties,

ties, but left his mind all unreformed. The churchmen took poſſeſſion of his ſoul: They ingrafted bigotry upon the darkneſs of his underſtanding; wound up the ſprings of ſuperſtition; and, from the horrors of their doctrine, induced his avarice to bend in purchaſe of ſalvation. Large endowments had been made, and Father Peter's monaſtery enriched with vaſt donations. The enmity to Periander firſt gave riſe to the proſecuted claim of his eſtates. Lord Melvil had devoted it, for a thouſand maſſes more, to the

ſame

ſame monaſtery. The death of Periander removed the object of the eccleſiaſtic's vengeance; but the object of his avarice was yet in being. The active ſpirit of Aſtianax the heir, and the unbounded love his excellencies gained him, together with his determined purpoſe, of appealing to the King in perſon; ſeemed to throw ſuch obſtacles to a deſign which fraud alone ſupported, that Father Peter's ſubtlety was confounded. He was convinced, that Aſtianax would not be the ſame ſupine opponent he had met with in Periander:

Periander: That he would never ceaſe to trace the ſubject to its ſource; and that the eſteem his virtues had procured him, would prompt a thouſand friends to aid his ſuit, and ſecond his appeal before the King; againſt a Lord whoſe violence and oppreſſion had long been infamous. He reflected, that the claim ſuſtained itſelf upon a forgery. That the King, whoſe youthful ſoul was not ſubjected to the bigotries of church dominion, would give but little credit to the dormant legends of a monaſtery. The world already

entertained

entertained ſuſpicions of the artifices of eccleſiaſtics. Their large acquiſitions had promoted jealouſies, and thence their authorities grew diſtaſteful. An apprehenſion of the diſcovery of this fraud brought many terrors. He reflected, that Aſtianax was now the only one remaining of his ancient houſe; and that, without an heir, his lands reverted to the lord. An eaſier paſſage this, than what he had deviſed in the days of Periander. The death of Aſtianax would accompliſh all his purpoſe. The perpetration committed

mitted to his own hands, avoided diſcovery, and left no accomplice to betray the treachery. With ſoul inured to ſin, he reſolved upon the horrid project; but angels interpoſing held his hands, and fruſtrated his device.

UNDER theſe circumſtances, ſee the eccleſiaſtic in his cell: The religious habit the cloak of hypocriſy caſt from his inflamed boſom, where diſappointment irritated all his ſinful diſpoſition. On the table where he reſted, ſtood the image of a ſuf-

fering

fering Deity, ſuſpended on the croſs; a roſary, and a book of prayer. The holy goſpels lay upon his couch, with wafers, and the hallowed water-urn o'erwhelm'd. Objects, to other minds, excitive of reverence and adoration; to Father Peter nothing more than inanimate emblems of his profeſſion. With ſuch attendants, who could apprehend that temporalities were all his care, Rapine and avarice! Vengeance and blood? Could not ſuch objects touch thy hardened heart, and prompt thee to look inward on thyſelf? Inured

to

to wickedneſs, habituated to this cell with theſe its ornaments, even the repreſentation of an expiring Saviour, even the doctrines of the Son of God, availed not. Undeterminate he in his gloomy mind, for ſome time revolved a thouſand ſtratagems; and, with his wiles, he wearied out the midnight lamp.

One morning Aſtianax was called, by ſome peculiar friends, to join the chace. Willing to remove the melancholy ideas which had poſſeſſed his mind, he accepted the invitation.

The boar was rouſed, was fierce, and made the hunters exerciſe all their alacrity and ſkill. Aſtianax was ſeparated from his friends, one companion left with him in the ſame thicket, a ſtranger, who, during the diverſion, ſeemed merely a diſtant ſpectator; but, upon nearer approach, appeared a ſpectator maſked. The ſummer ſun was vehement, and, for the freedom of the air, the youth had opened his boſom, where the onyx ſhone with rays diſtinguiſhing ſome propitious moment was at hand. The ſtranger ſtill approaching,

ing, ſeemed with cautious looks to ſurvey the wood, as if he feared their privacy might be interrupted. He drew near, when, opening his upper garment, and the maſk being withdrawn, or vaniſhing, diſcovered him to be an ancient Hermit, whoſe venerable look and gracious countenance beſpoke benevolence and virtue. The appearance of ſuch a perſon gave Aſtianax ſome ſurpriſe; the ſecrecy of the place, the diſguiſe, the freſh impreſſions Father Peter had left, all conduced to make him diſtruſt the holy looks of the

Hermit, and even to looſe his confidence in the auſpicious omens of the amulet. An expreſſion of anxiety ſate on his features. From Aſtianax's looks, the ſage diſtinguiſhed his ideas, for he was diſciplined in phiſiognomy. "Young man," ſays he, "lay aſide all apprehenſion that "I deſign you evil. I am no ſtran-"ger to the reaſon why my appear-"ance troubles your thoughts. The "late viſit which you received from "the principal of the monaſtery of "St Benedict, is well known to me. "I knew his enmity to Periander.

"I

"I knew his projects to diſpoſſeſs
"you of your inheritance. I am
"no ſtranger to his influence over
"Lord Melvil. The record with
"which he arms that infamous per-
"ſecutor, is all a forgery. My great
"eſteem of Periander is not leſſen-
"ed in Aſtianax. I am now a ſtran-
"ger to you; ſome little time will
"reveal my real character. I have
"aſſumed this diſguiſe, to give you
"ſuch intelligence, and to warn you
"of the evils which await you.
"From hence I go to Father Peter;
"my authority and influence are

" ſuch with him, that he ſhall ſtay
" the proſecution. But, young man,
" beware; for ere we meet again,
" a multitude of perils will beſet
" thee. Arm thy breaſt with every
" virtue; cloath thee with patience;
" truſt in Heaven; looſe not thy
" confidence in God, even in the
" very moments of thy greateſt af-
" flictions. The hand of Providence
" conducts the events of this life, by
" ways ſo myſterious to man, that
" what we eſteem the greateſt evils,
" often prove the paſſage to proſpe-
" rity and happineſs. The monk

" is

" is poſſeſſed of ſuch inveteracy,
" ſuch unrelenting vengeance, that
" this fruſtration of his purpoſe will
" ſtimulate his avarice, will ſerve
" him for the projecting of new
" ſchemes, and for the lighting up
" of malice yet more vehement.
" Prepare for wiles and treacheries,
" for they will ſurely tread upon
" thy heel, and circumvent thee in
" the moſt ſecret, ſecure, and un-
" ſuſpected channels. His talent
" for ſuch buſineſs is refined as Sa-
" tan's, and there my aid is totally
" impoſſible. Heaven permits, that

" the

" the Benedictine ſhall proceed in
" his iniquity, till, from the emi-
" nence, his fall ſhall become hor-
" rible. The ſins of his houſe ſhall
" raſe it to its foundation; and the
" traces of the habitation ſhall be ef-
" faced by the ploughſhare. Thou
" ſhalt once more ſee my counte-
" nance, when peace ſhall bleſs thee.
" Virtue conſiſteth not in wreſtling
" with the will of fate, but in ſuſ-
" taining the trials of life with for-
" titude and reſignation; ſupport-
" ing the mind from falling through
" laſſitude into deſpair, or from im-

" patience

" patience being fevered with raſh-
" neſs and headſtrong reſolution.
" The Author of every event trieth
" the heart of man; and, in his own
" good time, bringeth forth the
" fruits of virtue and of honour.
" To await with patience, to ſub-
" mit with reſignation, and without
" complainings, to ſuſtain the evils
" of mortality with perſeverance,
" and with piety, to ſtand erect be-
" fore the frowns of life's adverſi-
" ty, ſcorning to incline to either
" hand, either to forlornneſs, or to
" impetuoſity; but, looking forward

" with

"with faith, depending on the will "of Heaven, is to work out the "labours of propriety: For God "ordaineth, and his miniſters ex- "ecute. What ever is, derives its "origin from Heaven."

ASTIANAX liſtened with reverence and aſtoniſhment. The Hermit did not give him liberty to reply: He turned ſwiftly away, and, ſkilful in the mazes and intricacies of the thicket, ſoon was effectually conceal-ed, and clear of all purſuit! The converſation of this reverend per-

ſonage

ſonage filled Aſtianax's mind with thoughtfulneſs. He admired his wiſdom and his precepts, yet feared his preſcience. He turned homeward; and, as he paſſed along, thus he breathed his thoughts: "Whence "or what are the evils to betide, I "am not able to conjecture. Hence "ſhall this venerable ſage's precepts "be ever preſent to my mind. "Shame it is, that ſuch a wretch as "this Benedictine ſhould cloath him "with the cloak of ſanctity, and, in "his holy function, with hypocriſy, "to ſcreen ſuch evil diſpoſitions.

"Already

" Already learning gains a rapid
" progreſs in this land: The ſhades
" of ignorance are diſperſing, as
" the vapours of the valley mount
" upon the morning rays, to bring
" on a ſerene meridian. The crafts
" and artifices by which the church
" have hitherto held the vulgar in
" bigotry and ſuperſtition, (an iron
" arbitrary reign), are gradually
" diſſipating under the beams of
" learning; the darkneſs is ſtricken,
" the terrors and the goblins vaniſh,
" the authority of Rome waſteth a-
" way! Such men as Father Peter

" aid

" aid the bleſſed work of Provi-
" dence; yet the vices of the eccle-
" ſiaſtics, not only reflect infamy on
" themſelves, but even religion it-
" ſelf becomes odious through its
" miniſters. Men draw concluſions
" from appearances. Miracles are
" no longer the infatuation of this
" land. Theſe ſubtleties, when
" ſeen through, prejudice a people's
" minds even againſt the holieſt in-
" ſtitutions of the church. When
" men who miniſter in ſacred of-
" fice, ſhew themſelves unaffected
" by the doctrine which they would

 " inculcate,

" inculcate, the doctrine suffers in
" the contempt which betides the
" teacher. Men cannot be divine,
" but men may be discreet. The
" principles of religion breathe the
" support of liberty; but the church
" hath subverted them for the pro-
" motion of captivity and bond-
" age. The mind, when at large,
" will pursue the Divinity through
" every revelation, but strain it
" too far, or circumscribe it too nar-
" rowly, and religion is languish-
" ing in incomprehensibilities, or
" rushing headlong down the pre-

" cipice

cipice of blind implicit faith. The acceptable ſervices before God, are the workings of underſtanding; in other worſhip, alike the camel and the man bend the proſtrated knee. My prophetic mind preſages to me many degradations of the church. She hath advanced her pride and power with rapid progreſs, and proſperity hath made her mad. ——Religion is neglected for avarice——and opulence is the only object of her prayer—— ——the church, intoxicate

" with greatneſs, levels to its autho
" rity all under heaven, an
" diſtinguiſhes not God's ſufferanc
" from his approbation; or de
" cerns the diſtance between his long
" probations and his judgment
" The inſolence of prieſthood wil
" exiſt to the laſt verge; till at length
" the total diſſolution of theſe mo
" naſteries, theſe convents, theſe ca
" thedrals and colleges, (ſhakles o
" the hand of liberty), aſſumed i
" ages of ſupine indolence, will b
" torn off; and all the pompous ac
" clammations of a choir of prieſts

" will change for that moſt accepta-
" ble ſervice, the ſighings of a con-
" trite heart."

In a ſhort time Aſtianax experienced the accompliſhment of the Hermit's promiſe: The ſuit ſlept: Tranquillity poſſeſſed the boſom of Aſtianax.

That his ancient family might not be extinct, he determined to marry; and, ere it was long, was made happy in the excellencies of Jeſſalind, the daughter of a gentle-

man, who, with his family, for a few months, had viſited this land from Normandy. His fortune was but ſmall, but his proper judgement had led him to give a liberal education to his daughter; whoſe fine taſte had been improved in every degree of learning faſhionable in the age. She was ſkilful in every domeſtic art, and added thereto a perfection in muſic and dancing. Her perſon was amiable, her manners elegant, and her ſenſe refined. Theſe were diſplayed by an uninterrupted flow of health, pleaſantry, and good

ſpirits.

ſpirits. Time paſſed away felicitous and ſmooth.

Amongst a few ſelect friends, who ſometimes with their viſits changed the domeſtic ſcene, Polidore had gained a great aſcendence over the mind of Aſtianax. He had cultivated in his principles the moſt punctual ſenſe of honour, and inſpired him with every military fervour for defence of that honour by arms. His readineſs in rendering ſervices, his alacrity in executing any project which he knew would

give

give pleaſure to his friend, his impartial and diſintereſted counſels, had made Aſtianax place in him the utmoſt confidence and eſteem. Whilſt thoſe two friends were one day alone in the grove which adjoined to Aſtianax's manſion, thus Polidore addreſſed him. "I am ſo well "known to my friend, that I need "not ſeek to win his confidence, by "a rehearſal of my ſervices; or gain "his opinion of my veracity, by "aſſertions which would injure our "mutual eſteem. My regard for "Aſtianax makes me jealous of "every

" every injury done to his honour;
" and it becomes a duty in me to
" apprize him of every danger
" which befets him. Be not too
" much ſhocked, my friend, by a
" diſcovery in which your happi-
" neſs is in imminent peril. Your
" Jeſſalind is inconſtant!"

At that expreſſion, Aſtianax ſtarted, ſhuddered, and grew enflamed. "Have a care," cries he, "theſe are weapons too accute to "ſport with."

POLIDORE ſhewed a reſentful look at this reply. "Can you," ſays he, "diſpute my veracity? "Then let the reſt of the diſcovery "ſleep. If you think I injure her, "my profeſſion allows you means "to ſatisfy your honour: You "know I am a ſoldier."

THE experience which Aſtianax had of Polidore's ſincerity, gave him credulity: His thoughts were confuſed, his judgement confounded; and, amidſt the diſtraction of injured love, and the ſhame of ſuch diſhonour,

diſhonour, he gave way to an impetuous tide of jealouſy and reſentment. He was greedy of hearing his own calamities and diſgrace, and devoured the poiſonous and deſtructive tale with vehemence. Polidore, appeaſed by ſuch apology as Aſtianax, in his confuſion, could utter, was prompted to purſue the horrid hiſtory.

"GRINVIL, your kinſman, who, "from his earlieſt youth, hath been "your intimate and boſom friend, "'tis he that injures you. The "guilty

"guilty hour of aſſignation is at "hand. Is it not about the time "at which you have often ſaid, in "this ſeaſon of the year, your Jeſ-"ſalind retires to bathe?" "It is," replies Aſtianax, "and what of "that?" "This winding walk," ſays Polidore, "will lead us to the "bath-houſe undiſcovered. I will "attend you to the place, and leave "you to be aſſured of my truth." They haſtened on: They arrive within ſight of the bath: Polidore departed.

WITH arms enfolded, and with down-caſt eyes, Aſtianax ſtood ruminating on the tale. The more he revolved in his mind the circumſtances and events attending his hours of married life, the more was he induced to diſcredit the relation. A wiſh aroſe within his beating heart, born from reviving love and kindling hope: But ſoon that wiſh was blaſted, and jealouſy, in his dire realm of chaos, ſwept away extinguiſhed hope, and ſwallowed up expiring love; when, with eyes ſhedding tears of diſtraction, he be-

held the amulet portending woe. In a few moments, as he ſtood thus concealed in his ſhady ſituation, he viewed the lovely Jeſſalind, without attendant, moving to the bath. The ſerenity of virtue ſate ſmooth upon her brow; placid innocence becalm'd her looks, whilſt fond felicity was ſporting with inſuſpicion in dimples on her cheek. Over his whole ſoul, affection lay bleeding. His eyes, as they dwelt upon the object, ſwam in tears; whilſt the blackneſs of his mind, in mourning, abſorbed the image from the aching optics,

optics, and never returned one fair refraction to the ſeat of love. When nature ſtruggled, to give birth to hope, the amulet, and Polidore's known faith, obſtructed every paſſage, but the influx of deſpair.

SHE entered the bath. The ſound of ſeveral voices ſtruck Aſtianax's ear! His heart was thrown into dreadful convulſions, and all his boſom blazed with reſentment. His impatience became unſupportable, he ruſhed from his conceal-

ment; and, burſting into the anti-chamber of the bath, diſcovered the diſconcerted and alarmed Jeſſalind, with the treacherous Grinvil! For jealouſy, for madneſs, this was evidence ſufficient. The emotions of Aſtianax's breaſt ſtifled his words; he only had power left him to call Grinvil to defend himſelf. Grinvil would have parley'd, but Aſtianax ruſhed on. The terrified Jeſſalind fainted! Sword met with ſword, and, in the boſom of Grinvil, the horrid ſteel was plunged!

SCARCE breathing from his victory, Aſtianax ſtepped forward to deſtroy the fair, the inſenſible Jeſſalind! A dreadful burſt of thunder ſeem'd to make the earth tremble to the centre! Rous'd from the very graſp of death, Grinvil caſt up his hand and eyes; and, faultering, bid him forbear! The attitude, the accents of his dying friend, ſeem'd to expreſs ſomething irreſiſtible! Gaſping with rage, Aſtianax pauſed, as the lion over his captive ſtag, when breathleſs with the chace, to meditate his ravenous repaſt.

Grinvil took poſſeſſion of this interval. "If you ſuſpect the virtue of "your wife, you are deceived. "Our meeting here was accidental. "I die content, if I ſhould ſave "her innocence." He ceas'd—The blood guſhed from his wound in torrents—His ſpeech is gone—His eyes grow dim—He faints——

ASTIANAX, like one who heard the direful voice of an avenging angel, denouncing deſolation to whole empires, ſtood fixed in horror! His extended eyes ſhifted their diſtract-

ed

ed ſtare from Jeſſalind to Grinvil! His trembling hands, ſtained with the murder of his friend, convulſively graſped his reeking ſword! Irreſolute for ſuicide; irreſolute for flight; too proud to ſeek for ſanctuary; not longer able to endure the horrid ſpectacle, he ſought the grove; he ſought ſome hiding place, where he might form a reſolution for his conduct. The grove renewed his grief. Conſcience ceaſes not to haunt the ſteps of guilt. The grove, the bath, alike afforded him objects for deſpair: Too late he proved

proved the want of diſcretion in Polidore; for, from his well-proved faith, he could never conceive that he was treacherous: Too late he recollects the pious precepts of the Hermit on the chaſe: Too late he finds that the abortive claim, ſo baſely inſtigated by the Benedictine, was now effected; and, as a murderer, not only life was forfeited, but his lands eſcheated to Lord Melvil! How dreadful was the proſpect of his total deſolation? Diveſted of his property; guilty of innocent blood; a victim due to juſtice. By one

one raſh act, ruſhed from the height of human happineſs, into the darkeſt gulph of woe! Fallen from affluence, from the joys of virtuous love, domeſtic harmony, and heartfelt ſelf-approving rectitude and honour! But yet, to aggravate and crown his miſery, the innocent traduced Jeſſalind, widowed, in penury, and at the inſtant pregnant.

THE firſt interval of judgement, prompted Aſtianax to ſeek the thickeſt cover of an adjoining foreſt to conceal him, till the approach of night;

night; as he was aſſured, in theſe walks, the alarm would ſpeedily be ſpread, and his eſcape fruſtrated; thence, under the favour of the darkneſs, he determined to proceed into the mountains, and, at ſome ſecure diſtance, live unknown; till, perchance, a favourable opportunity might preſent, to gain an advocate for the obtaining royal clemency.

How diſtracting a ſcene preſented itſelf to Jeſſalind, upon her recovery from her ſwoon: Grinvil weltering in his blood, convulſed, and in the agonies

agonies of death! Aſtianax gone! gone full of condemnations, jealouſy and hatred againſt his innocent and forlorn Jeſſalind! "Then," cries ſhe, "all the remainder of exiſtence is "given to deſpair!" With lamentations and diſhevel'd hair, ſhe fled into the avenue, and ſtrained her voice with inceſſant calls on her beloved huſband! No voice reply'd but plaintive echo, ſobbing in the gloomy grove. She flew to her late happy habitation: The domeſtics, alarmed at her complainings, ſtood aſtoniſhed, and melting into tears.

As

As ſoon as the dreadful ſtory was related, Grinvil's body was removed by a faithful old ſervant; and by him carried to a friend, a ſhepherd, who inhabited a cot, in an adjoining valley; a man well ſkilled in ſalutary drugs; and one, who, in his youth, from long ſervices in arms, had acquired a wonderous knowledge in the art of ſurgery: Some faint remains of life appearing, he had hopes the wound might not prove mortal.

WHILST theſe matters were tranſacting, the rumour ſpread with rapid wing, and ſoon had reached Lord Melvil's ears; whoſe officers, like hungry wolves upon the ſnow-cloath'd Alps, poured down their rude rapacious bands on the eſtates of the unfortunate Aſtianax. They beſet the manſion houſe; poſſeſs themſelves of all; and, with a brutality peculiar to their office, command the friendleſs heart-broken widow'd Jeſſalind to quit the place. The command admitted no reply; their hardened hearts ſuffered no

compaſſion; and, whilſt her lingering ſteps hung trembling on the threſhold which ſhe loved, with ſavage rage they puſh her out!

Now all the elements in war ſeemed to have made this habitation the ſcene of their dire vengeance! Fierce lightnings blazed in the apartments, and ruſh upon each gallery! Tremendous burſts of thunder ſhook the building to its foundation! As if a torrent poured its waters down the ſtairs, the noiſe of vaſt cafcades were heard; and, in the painted gallery,

gallery, the agitated coat of mail, ſounded with the clangour of a mighty combat.

THE wretches who executed Lord Melvil's commiſſion, conjecturing they were beſet with evil ſpirits, fled, and left the place without inhabitants.

THE report of theſe amazing circumſtances buſy'd the ear of every villager. It reach'd the monaſtery of St Benedict. The prieſts, enflamed with the zeal of their hypocri-

ſy, rejoiced in the intelligence, eſteeming all theſe wonders, as the bugbears born of Credulity and Ignorance: And, apprehending this a fortunate opportunity to execute their exorciſms, and acquire an impious credit with the vulgar, by exerciſing the miraculous privilege of chaining ſpirits by their religious offices; they ſought their principal to crave his licence, for their viſiting the houſe of the unfortunate Aſtianax. Father Peter was then in cloſe conference with one, on buſineſs of importance, and would not be diſturbed

ed; well judging, it were beſt for theſe raſh men, not to brave the wrath of the enchanted armour. At this very inſtant Father Peter entertained a viſiter, whoſe friendſhip was not to be neglected. The grant of Aſtianax's eſcheated lands, already was framing for the records of the monaſtery: And Polidore was ſhut up with the monk in his cell, to claim the miſerable reward of his ineſtimable ſervices. Polidore had been gained by avarice and great gratuities, to perpetrate the worſt of crimes. The monk, baffled in

his former projects, caſt his eyes towards the ſoldier, whoſe love of gain he perceived ſtood incompatible with his ſincerity; and that intereſt could eaſily ſubvert his ſpecious principles. He won the ſoul of this baſe man, by aſſurances that certain lands which lay contiguous to his ſcanty farm, ſhould be granted by the monaſtery, together with infallible abſolution, if he ſhould be the means of Aſtianax's overthrow. Artful and ſubtle, he deviſed the plan; and, at this inſtant, the traitor liſtened to aſſurances, that ſo

ſoon

ſoon as Lord Melvil ſealed the grant, he ſhould receive the rewards of his treachery.

THE malicious monk, reſolute in his purpoſe, had determined to engage this his emiſſary; for, from his having been many years a miſſionary in his younger days, he had acquired a competent knowledge of the diſpoſition of a ſoldier, born in abject life, and bred a mercenary; and, whilſt he fixed his project and his plan, thus he meditated on the character of his accomplice.

"THIS

" This Polidore he is a ſoldier,
" born of the loweſt of mankind,
" unlettered and unprincipled. He
" has riſen through the fatalities of
" war, and mounted by the ſcale of
" death to ſuperiority: He hath
" been tutor'd in ſubtleties and craft,
" purloining other mens opinions,
" paſſions, and purpoſes, to win the
" way to his promotion. It was his
" earlieſt object; his vacant ſoul re-
" ceived it for a ſolitary portion.
" Thus ambition hath become his
" only paſſion. The ſlaughter of
" his brother-ſoldier is his proſpe-
" rity,

" rity, and his exaltation comes
" foſtered in bloodſhed. Thence it
" is, that affection and compaſſion
" never were ſubjects of his brutal
" boſom. All true courage is deri-
" ved from virtue, and honour
" from integrity; but the ſoldier's
" ſubſtitutes for theſe are ſavage
" inſenſibility, and the law of arms.
" From his youth, his eſtimates of
" mankind have been formed from
" himſelf; he barters exiſtence for
" his pay; his blood is hired with
" the wages: So every attachment,
" every principle, every price is gi-
" ven

"ven to ſerve ambition." Such is the man in whom Father Peter puts his confidence. Immerſed in crimes like theſe, ſuch a man cannot poſſeſs one virtue. Such a man can aſſaſſinate his friend.

JESSALIND ſought a reſting place in an adjoining convent, whoſe abbeſs was a diſtant relation to her huſband. Here ſhe determined to remain, until ſhe could hear from her father in Normandy, into whoſe arms ſhe would throw herſelf, to

ſpend

ſpend the remainder of her miſerable days.

THE night which had overſhadowed Aſtianax, was heavily beſet with clouds, and the young moon ſoon reach'd the duſky horizon; yet, with unremitting ſteps, he ſought the heath. At length he ſat him down, where rugged rocks had formed a little circle, reſorted to by goats, who ſhunned the ſtorms of winter, or ſought the ſhadowy haunt to ſcreen them from the ſummer-ſun. Amidſt the duſ-

ty

ty tracks, ſome little plots of graſs were ſcattered, inviting to repoſe; and, down the rifted cliffs, a ſtream of water trickled through the moſs, to tempt the fainting lips with its refreſhment. The weary limbs will yield to reſt, even amidſt the afflictions of the mind. The graſs, the murmuring breeze, the water-trill, all tempted ſleep. Aſtianax ſunk into repoſe. Ere long, beyond the hills the diſtant thunders growl'd, and guſhing winds buſtle through the rocks. The ſtorm advances, and now a horrid peal burſts o'er

Aſtianax's

Aſtianax's head. Aſtoniſhed he awakes. In terror he cries out, "Here reſts the miſcreant, O Lord: "From thee the ſinner finds no "hiding place: Thy vengeance ever "overtakes the guilty." The heavy clouds were rent; light changing inſtantaneous with darkneſs; floods of lightning fill the whole welkin with a blaze; light, too acute for mortal eye, ſucceeds impenetrable darkneſs; the loud thunder-claps, which ſeemed to convulſe the world, in their intervals, were followed by a dreary univerſal ſilence, in which

the very breezes ſlept. Aſtianax trembled! The human mind, conſcious of evil, is buſy to torment itſelf. Guilt dragging on remorſe, brings terror his attendant. Aſtianax doubted not the angry arm of Providence wielded the ſtorm, to brand the odious wretch, whoſe hands were red with the murder of his friend, and whoſe head was overwhelmed with the miſery of having undone a virtuous wife, and beggar'd his progeny even in the womb.

At length the hurricane ſubſides, and, ere it was long, the morning dawns; the clouds had gathered up their heavy ſkirts, and left the horizon tinged with a ſilver ray, which lighted up the pale grey eye of morn. The diſtant hills were green to the view, and night's laſt ſhadow fled adown the valleys, mixing with the blue trimmed vapours. The heavens above were muffled in a ſhaggy cloak, like ruffled plumes, when the awaking vulture ſhakes his pinions. At length the fringe of every folding cloud was ſtained

with crimſon; the dye improves, till the whole velvet mantle of the riſing day, glowed into ſcarlet, edged with burniſhed gold; and forth aſcends the ruddy orb of light, exulting in the race he now renews. All nature, as if aſhamed of being caught within the ſluggard arms of ſleep, wore bluſhes. Now the univerſal ſilence is ſubdued: The birds awake the ſong: The curlew pipes it as he paſſes on: The plover, on her buſtling pinion, ſallies round, and the heath cock cackles to his brood

brood, to lead them to the ſweet repaſt of bilberries luxuriant.

How cheering is the face of morn to innocence! but to Aſtianax it was increaſe of woe. The night removed, removes his ſafety. Pent in by rocks, within a narrow ſpace, far from the road of any paſſengers, ſave ſhepherds, he reſolved to paſs away the day; and when the evening returned, purſue his way into the mountains, where there are mines; and there, amongſt theſe miſerable men, who earn a ſorry

ſuſtenance, by labouring in the bowels of the earth, he might at once ſupport exiſtence, and conceal himſelf, till he could ſend intelligence to Alfred, the father of his Jeſſalind, of his ſituation, that he might move the throne for pardon. Amongſt the cliffs, he gathered berries to ſtay his hunger, from briers, brambles, and the juniper, and drank his drink freſh from the fountain's lip.

As he ſate in tears, to paſs away the heavy hours of day, the dreary waſte

waſte ſurrounding, afforded no proſpects to amuſe the mind; where Nature ſate in Deſolation's weeds, and mourned the long protracted abſence of Sylva and her ſiſter Ceres. All around, or hill, or dale, was clad in ruſſet heath; ſave here and there a barren mountain lifts its rugged brow, a maſs of ſtorm-bleach'd cliffs, where vegetation, from the reign of chaos, never ſmiled; or chance ſome plots lying on the diſtant ſteep, from whence the heath, by lightning burnt, had made a ſpace for graſs and paſturage; where ſhaggy goats

were

were ſeen to climb, or ſome few ſcattered ſheep; over which a ſtarving ſhepherd hung, deſponding of the providence of Heaven; and ſcarce believes himſelf the better brute. Whilſt near at hand a haſty brook was ſeen, as driven on from rock to rock in courſe confuſed, pouring its frothy ſtreams precipitate; impatient to eſcape the inhoſpitable, the native land: Along whoſe channel rocks beſet with yew, ſtand mutes to mourn her paſſage into happier climes. No ſwallow flitted through the winding way, nor

rail

rail conſoled her negro race with chearful call: A ſad reſort for ſickening goats, a ſecret dell where they could hide their woe from mortal eye; ſave a ſingle pair of ravens, who occupied the place, and named it the vale of melancholy; where, to the ear of miſery, they told the daily tale of death. Whilſt o'er the ſpacious tract of moor, and down the dreary dale, Aſtianax's eye wearily wandered, the ſun had ſhot his rays beyond the cloud, and lighted up the diſtant hill, where, grief to his ſoul, at the ſtretch of ſight, he viewed

viewed the fair encloſures, and the chearful verdure of a cultivated land, as extending from out the richer valley. The vapours which o'erhang the dale, ſeeming to blaze with light, as if the God of nature ſhed a bounteous ſmile upon the favoured ſcene.

After ſome days journey, diſtance ſecured the wanderer; and now he ventured forth by day. In his wretched journey, accident had brought him to a ſhepherd's hut, placed in a little vale, ſurrounded by

by a chain of mountains; where a few acres, with freſh verdure, paſtured a cow. The hills deſcending to the ſouth, abounded with wild thyme, and variegated panſies; where a flock of ſheep, with fleeces white as ſnow, were ſcattered up and down. The northern hills ſtood rugged and black, mourning the diſtant God of day, who only once a year, ſhot tranſverſe rays acroſs the waſte; and look'd aſkance upon the ſeat of barrenneſs. Through this valley a little ſtream, with many meandrings, winds its tardy pace,

as

as if it lingered in the ſcene it loved. Along the margin nodding willows play'd with fond reflection in the ſilver lake: There hazels mixed with poplars ſtand, where thruſhes whiſtle on the rural ſong of ſweet retirement. A little plain fronted the hut, where a ſingle thorn had grown for half a century; beneath whoſe ſhade, a bench built up of ſtones and turf, afforded a pleaſing reſting place. Thick ivy covered the cottage front, and houſe leek ornamented the thatch. A little plot of garden ground was ſtocked with

with roots; where, in one continued range, a multitude of bee-hives ſtood, and, in the ſunſhine, ſent their buzzing myriads forth to labour. At the approach of Aſtianax, a dog that ſlumbered in his watch, gave the alarm; and, to his barkings echo from the hill, repeats the ſignal to the diſtant ſwain. A grey old man came forth, whoſe countenance ſhone with benevolence; as wondering to behold a man in gay apparel wandering there, amidſt the mountains, far from any road, a place ſcarce acceſſible, and ſeldom

viſited by any but ſhepherds: He, for a while, remained ſilent, whilſt he ſurveyed Aſtianax with deep attention. He ſaluted him: Enquired what occaſion brought him there, and what thoſe ſorrows were which he perceived to hang upon his brow. Aſtianax returned his gracious looks with tears. "Father," ſays he, "I "am unfortunate: My miſeries have "overwhelmed me: The treachery "of men hath made me hate their "intercourſe: And here I wander, "finding greater ſatisfaction in "waſtes and wilds, ſuſtaining life "with

" with berries and the fountain's
" brim, than in the crowded hall
" buſy'd with ſervile cringing dogs,
" and ſmelling rank of luxury and
" riot."

THE ſhepherd, from his talk, conceived Aſtianax was diſordered in his mind. His compaſſion prompted him to lend his aid to calm his troubled reaſon. Charity, with her looks benign, lighted up his countenance; and the Divinity ſhone forth his preſence on his features: Wiſdom, with ſilver-hair'd experi-

ence, ſtood confeſt o'er all his figure: "Bleſſed old age," exclaimed the enraptured Aſtianax, "in thee man-"kind confeſs the image which "God ordained in the firſt crea-"tion."——

"YOUNG man," interrupts the ſhepherd, "reſt here a little. Firſt, "I pray thee, recollect, that all the "ways of Providence are left un-"ſearchable to human underſtand-"ing; and ſo blind are we, that of-"tentimes thoſe things which we "eſteem calamities, lead to the

"birth

" birth of our felicity; and what
" is preſent evil, is the very paſſage
" to our proſperity. Tell me whence
" are all thy ſorrows. I would talk
" to thee of that all-ſeeing ever-
" bounteous God, who, deſpiſing
" not the ſighings of a contrite
" heart, drieth up the tears of men
" in miſery. Perchance I thus, his
" miniſter, may lend thee conſola-
" tion." Aſtianax was moved a-new: He recollected the admoni-tions of the Hermit: Conſcious that he had neglected his ſage precepts, and yielded himſelf a ſacrifice to

paſſion, freſh tears were ſhed. After ſome moments of aſtoniſhment, that the judgement of each reverend teacher had admoniſhed him to principles of the like import, and weighing in his thought the tenor of his crimes, as being incapable of conſolation; he replies, "In vain "you talk of that great Being, in "whom alone is peace: In vain "you aſk of my afflictions: My "miſeries are not to be revealed: "The ſecret, through a thouſand "vows, is bound in darkneſs! The "recollection will for ever be my "torment,

" torment; madneſs would attend
" deſcription! The baſeneſs, the
" villainies, the treacheries of man-
" kind, afford a hiſtory ſo horrid,
" that their permiſſion, in the eye of
" Heaven, would make even zealots
" ſtagger from their religion into
" infidelity, and blaſphemouſly cry,
" amidſt the darkneſs, there is no
" God! My wretchedneſs hath
" wreſtled with conſolation by the
" way, and the Comforter is paſſed
" by. Time once elapſed turneth
" not his wings. Offended Heaven
" hath marked me with the ſeal of
" fate;

"fate; from the celeſtial eye I wan-
"der forth, like Cain, to hide me
"from the countenance divine,
"which I have enflamed with
"wrath; if, in this world, a place
"is found where God abideth not.
"But behold! amidſt theſe horrid
"waſtes, this little paradiſe is pla-
"ced, where he communes with
"ſhepherds."

AFTER ſome little talk, the good old man deſired his viſiter to take refreſhment, and ſet before him, milk, with butter, honey, and bread; and,

to

to conclude the meſs, in a plain cup of horn, ſerved him with nectar, brewed from the ſtores the buſy bees had yielded. The cheering repaſt, afforded gayer ſpirits. The ſhepherd, with joy, perceived his gueſt's countenance much brightened: His benevolent heart exulted, he aſks the ſtranger to enter his hut, where a grave bending matron, the conſort of the ſhepherd's happineſs, was aſſiduous in the cleanly offices of her houſehold. From the hills returned the ſhepherd's two ſons; hardy and hale the youths

breath'd

breath'd freſhneſs and health. In gratitude for the bounty of their father, Aſtianax, from his purſe, preſented them with each two broad pieces of gold. Wonder ſtruck their countenance; they were aſtoniſh'd at the gift; and their hearts were filled with wiſhes, to render him good offices.

Astianax aroſe, and bid the ſhepherd and his family adieu. The old man ſtay'd him, earneſtly deſiring to know, whither he ſought to go, or where he hoped to reſt?

The

The queſtion could not be reſolved. He knew not whither he wandered; but, to the importuning of his hoſt, at length he anſwered: "I ſeek ſome "place for my retirement, where "Innocence and Truth have form-"ed their habitation; if they, ere "this, are not eſcap'd to Heaven. I "have forſworn the buſy world, and "ſeek to form ſome Hermitage, where "I may ſpend my life in prayer and "meditation, by penitence to pur-"chaſe expiation of my crimes. "Some Hermitage where few men "come, and yet where human

"ſteps

" ſteps may tread, that ſeeing them
" I may remember what I am; and
" renewing to my mind the hiſtory
" of mankind, I may daily, to the
" throne of Heaven, put up pe-
" titions for mercies on them; to
" repay evil with good, and cloſe
" this life of miſery and care, in
" ſupplications for the pardon of
" the world."

" An Hermitage you ſeek," replies the ſhepherd, " the Hermitage of
" Paul Du' Monte, as old tradition
" goes, was near this place."

THE name Du' Monte ſtruck Aſtianax with horror! His own ſir-name. He thought he had aſſociated with necromancers. The old man beheld his agitation with ſurpriſe, and aſk'd the cauſe: But he was replied to with ſighs. "My "ſons," added the ſhepherd, "ſhall "attend you to the hill, where, ſto-"ry tells, this ancient Hermit dwelt; "a man of holy life, and ſage be-"yond his race: Of noted birth, "near in blood to nobles; yet there "he dwelt. The firſt ſurpriſe paſt "over, Aſtianax, with impatience,

"desired the young men would ac-
"company him." The task was arduous, but they were ready to testify their gratitude by such their assiduity. "Repose yourself with
"us this night," the shepherd said,
"the spot is distant six hours jour-
"ney; there I have a few good
"goats; and, at some seasons, these
"my sons go near the place, to see
"how fares my herd. In the morning
"they shall shew the way; and, that
"the hours may not seem irksome,
"I will relate to you the history, as
"I received it from my grandsire;
"who,

" who, though then of ninety years " of age, had heard the tale when " young, as a relation of far diſtant " facts." With anxious ear Aſtianax attended. The ſhepherd thus:

" FROM Normandy the good " man came, the youngeſt ſon of " Lord Du' Monte. Bred to the " holy office of a prieſt; he was a " member of the priory of St Au- " guſtine."

ASTIANAX was greatly agitated at this prelude. His colour came

and fled alternately. The ſhepherd, obſerving his confuſion, aſked him, "Wherefore the ſtory moved him? "The hiſtory of a man, who, cen- "turies ago, had hid himſelf amidſt "theſe wilds; and of whom he ap- "prehended, Aſtianax had never "heard till then." To conceal his thoughts, he replied: "The ſtory, "in its beginning, reminds me of "my father, who, in my youth, "would often laugh, and tell of "mad Du'Monte. The memory "of that father, is ſacred to my "ſoul. Theſe ſighs a duteous tri-

"bute

" bute to his memory. His parental
" virtues are indelibly written on
" my recollection."

" To the Hermit," continued the ſhepherd, " in reward for his great " piety, a viſiting angel left the " realms of light, to pour upon him " gifts moſt excellent and ſuperna- " tural. The gift of healing was his " own, and ſimples gathered from " the cliffs and wilds, became from " him moſt ſalutary medicine. His " knowledge in Nature's ſecrets " was extenſive; he foretold the

" ſeaſons and their changes, and
" ſaw the dire approach of famine,
" peſtilence, or war. His wiſdom
" afforded him the power of upright
" judgement; and with the ſhep-
" herds he was judge, determining
" their wrongs and injuries. He
" taught the rudeſt men the ſenſe
" of moral virtues; and the lips of
" infants breath'd his prayer. The
" ſins and ſubtleties of the eccleſia-
" ſtics of St Auguſtine's houſe diſ-
" guſted him: Their avarice and
" their intrigues were oft his talk;
" and, when he uttered condemna-

" tions

" tions on their lives, he trembled
" for the wrath of Heaven, which
" thoſe moſt impious men provoked
" by their hypocriſy. The errors
" of thoſe learned ſinners, defying
" the enlightened ſpirit of ſcience,
" hardily braving a Deity, in
" whoſe name they taught deceit,
" and cloak'd the worſt of crimes,
" ſo offended the upright ſoul of
" Paul Du' Monte, that he ſought
" theſe barren mountains, there to
" devote his life to piety and god-
" ly works. In this ſolitude he
" remained for many ſeaſons; at
" length,

" length, age and infirmity had bent
" his reverend figure; and every
" day, for long he ſate at the en-
" trance of his cell, as if watchful
" for his releaſing angel, to give
" his ſpirit freedom from mortality:
" And every ſhepherd often would
" he aſk, if yet no ſtranger
" was perceived about the moun-
" tains, as queſting for his habita-
" tion. At length the viſiter ap-
" peared, with whom he ſeemed
" affectionately intimate. One day
" he ſummoned to his cell the
" neighbouring herdſmen, and thus
" addreſſed

" addreſſed them : That you may
" declare my words unto your chil-
" dren, and they to late poſterity deli-
" ver the tradition down, I call you
" here. You have known me long,
" and know my truth ; this viſiter he
" is my brother. I had foretold his
" coming, and I knew it was the ſig-
" nal of my mortal diſſolution. Scarce
" yet an hour remains for life. The
" herds all lov'd the Hermit, and all
" wept. Forth from his breaſt he
" drew a crucifix, and placed it on
" his brother's neck: Wear this, he
" cries, beloved Norban."

At that name Aſtianax, like one ſtruck with inſtantaneous lightning, ſtarted, and ſunk upon a knee, with hands extended towards the ſhepherd, in aſtoniſhment, devouring every accent, and each look.

The old man thought theſe were the ſtarts and paſſions of his malady, pitying which, he forbore to proceed. Aſtianax, yet kneeling, and trembling with impatience, requeſted him to go on. He obeyed. "Wear this, beloved Norban, ſaid "the Hermit; ſword, peſtilence, "and

" and ſtorms, ſhall never injure
" thee, whilſt this crucifix ſhall
" hang upon thy neck. The jewel
" of extraordinary nature, no ſoon-
" er reſted on the boſom of Norban,
" than forth it ſhed a blaze of light,
" too piercing for the herds to gaze
" upon. This ſhalt thou wear,
" continued the Hermit, till a good
" old age ſhall lead thee through the
" tranquil hours, and yield thee to
" the peaceful ſleep of death; but
" I charge thee, never divulge to
" any of thy kindred what further
" I relate. When the hour of thy

" diſſolution

"diſſolution comes upon thee, en-
"join thy ſon in vows, that with
"thy armour this gem may hang
"within the manſion of Du'
"Monte: There it ſhall hang for
"ages, till one of thy good race,
"whom Heaven appoints to give
"reſt unto my aſhes, ſhall reaſſume
"it, and with it all its virtues."

THE agitation ſtill encreaſed within the boſom of Aſtianax: He ſcarce appeared to breathe, for wonder! The ſhepherd went on. "La-
"ment not for me, ſaid the Her-
"mit,

" mit, it is alone the fleſh which
" ſleeps: For I ſhall change this na-
" ture into ſpirit, that I may, for
" ſeven ages yet to come, become
" the guardian of my friends: Un-
" til theſe bones ſhall lie with my
" forefathers in the tomb, my ſoul
" ſhall be a wanderer in the middle
" regions; thence I ſhall paſs, a me-
" diating ſpirit, into the preſence of
" the Divinity, preſenting the pe-
" titions of thy poſterity on earth,
" before his everlaſting throne. In
" that period of time, when my
" aſhes ſhall reſt in the ſepulchre of

" the Du' Montes, thy iſſue Norban
" will again reaſſume their ducal ti-
" tle, and poſſeſs the large demains
" which Norman William granted
" to our anceſtor, as a reward for
" his illuſtrious virtues. Depart,
" he cry'd, and leave me to my
" prayer. Indulge this laſt embrace
" —a brother's kiſs—adieu!"

NORBAN, with the herdſmen, re-
tired, and left the cell. Inſtantly
the mountain ſhook, as if the world
was falling into ruin; in the ſtrange
convulſion, the rocks, with mighty
ſounds,

ſounds, were torn aſunder; burſting waters looſened from their ſubterraneous priſons; tumbling rocks and peals of thunder in the bowels of the earth; made a tremendous uproar! The cell was cloſed, and, from the cliffs above, a headlong torrent ruſhed, in whoſe waters the ſun beams ſtruck, and ſhewed a blaze of light, like that protecting ſword, which ſhone at Eden's gate, to guard the ſacred paſs.

NORBAN, with the ſpectators, fled in aſtoniſhment! Aſtianax, in ſilence,

liſtened to the lateſt accents, which, for ſome time, ſeemed to ſound upon his wondering ear. His attitude was motionleſs, until the ſhepherd, in compaſſion to his malady, lent him his arm, and rouſed him from his depth of thought. With claſping hands, and eyes uplifted, he repeats: "Till one of thy good race, "whom Heaven appoints to give "reſt unto my aſhes, ſhall reaſſume "it, and with it all its virtues.— "Moſt wonderful and moſt myſte- "rious ſentences! Grant unto me, "almighty Lord of Heaven, who

"ſeeſt

" ſeeſt all the ſecrets of futurity, the " underſtanding of theſe dark pre- " ſages; make me the miniſter of " this great work, and guide me " on to bleſs the ſpirit of Du " Monte."

THE good old ſhepherd ſmiled, and his two ſons laughed out aloud, at theſe his ſtrange extravagancies. Aſtianax was not moved at their improprieties.

" GRANT unto me," he cries with an encreaſing fervour, " grant

" unto me, O God, the virtuous
" labour of giving reſt unto the
" bones of Paul Du' Monte within
" the tomb of his forefathers! Con-
" ſcious I am of the imperfection of
" human judgement! Men are blind
" in their diſtinctions between good
" and evil! The wretchedneſs which
" I endured, thy Providence ordain-
" ed for good, that thence I might
" be brought into this pious office;
" and all thoſe evils which betided
" me, were only means of this thy
" work deſtined for me from ſeven
" long ages paſt. As my preſent

" duty

" duty was concealed in time elap-
" ſed, ſo are the means accompliſh-
" ing theſe propheſies unveiled from
" comprehenſion ; but my breaſt
" feels all thy holy inſpiration, which
" pours upon my ſpirit confidence
" and intrepidity, and with me is
" thy mighty arm, before whoſe
" power nothing remains impoſſi-
" ble."

He raiſed himſelf, and, on his o-pened boſom hung the onyx, blaz-ing forth a luſtre equal to the mid-night moon, when paſſing clouds give

give forth her ſilver rays on the ſtill ocean, as ſhe rolls her chariot wheels o'er her meridian. Amazement ſtruck the cottagers! they were aſhamed of their arrogance, and turned away their face! Aſtianax conſoled them: His wild appearance carry'd the impreſſions they had entertained. No wonder the idea of ſuch malady had poſſeſſed their minds at his being ſeen amidſt the wildeſt waſtes of Britain, where none but ſhepherds had, for ages paſt, been known to viſit: But now they looked upon the ſtranger as a man

of

of God, led forth by Providence's ſecret hand, on embaſſy miraculous.

SOON as it was morning, Aſtianax, with the two young ſhepherds, proceeded to the hills. The country ſeemed to have changed its aſpect; the young men wandered on bewildered! Terror came upon them, and they fled! Aſtianax all the day perſevered in his journey up the ſteeps, led by a winding way which ſeemed to have been worn by paſſing goats. At length, fatigued, he ſate down beneath the covert of a ſolitary

ſolitary yew, which hung from off the brink of rocks yet uneſſay'd; and, night approaching, there he ſlept! And, as he ſlept, his mind was touched with images, far diſtant from the thoughts which had employed the day. His friend, the ſlaughtered Grinvil, ſeem'd to paſs before him, array'd for battle. Laurels wreathed a verdant ſhade over his caſque; and, on his ſword the image of victory ſtood graven; the field was gay with ſpring; and, o'er the flowers, his ſteed on bounding paſterns, ſeemed to tread as light as air;

air; and, ſporting with the bit, ſubmitted play-fully to his reſtraint. The dreamer's fluttering heart received the accents uttered by the ſhade: "Did Aſtianax but live, "did the brave man but know that "Grinvil is on earth, and heard "him call him to the field of glory, "how would his bounding ſoul leap "from the fetters of deſpair and "wretchedneſs, and glow with the "ardour of reviving virtue? brighter blazing, as the meteor adds to "its luſtre, by the darkneſs of the "night, from whence it burſts into "exiſtence.

" exiſtence. Then would I reſtore " him to theſe worthy friends, and " ſave a ſuicide! They follow me." The viſion ſeemed to keep ſilence. When there ſucceeded, dreſt in bridal robes, a fair one led reluctant on, whoſe down-caſt countenance was hidden from the dreamer's eye. At diſtance ſtood the wedding couch crowded with attendants, and overſpread with roſes: The crimſon curtain was ſupported by laughing Cupids, and the bluſhing Graces played with the bridal girdle. As the bride approach'd the bed, with

tear-

tear-fill'd eyes, ſhe caſt up looks of anguiſh to the ſkies, and lifted her reſolute arm to plunge a dagger in her boſom, crying out: "I never "ceaſe to love thee, my Aſtianax!" But ere the blow was ſtruck, there ruſh'd upon her a young ſtripling, calling himſelf her ſon, and ſhewed the dreamer that it was his Jeſſalind.

In a tumult of diſtreſs and joy, trembling, yet fevered, the aſtoniſhed wanderer awaked, when all was paſt away; and the upriſing ſun chid his dilatory ſteps, and gave him

back the proſpect of rude mountains, horrid waſtes, and piles of rocks; ſuch as old chaos formed in ſportive mood, as monuments of his dreary empire. His amazement encreaſed, when he beheld the face of nature changed, and, like his dream, the wonderous work of cauſes ſupernatural preſenting to him images fantaſtical and wild. The hill was rent, and opened to his eye a winding paſſage through ſtupendous rocks, which ſeemed to prop the azure arch of Heaven. As he paſſed on, within ſome little diſtance, a cryſtal

cryſtal rill poured its divided ſtreams from high, and trill'd from cliff to cliff around a gaping cavern, which opened its dreary boſom to the view. Led by an impulſe irreſiſtible, Aſtianax with virtuous fortitude approached. The onyx ſhed propitious beams, conducting him through narrow paſſes to a ſpacious cell; whoſe ample roof, incruſted with variety of minerals, reflected to his eye the blaze of gems innumerable.

At a table, form'd of porphyry, cut from the ſolid maſs whereon it ſtood, there ſate, in meditative poſture, the figure of a man, as if preſerved by ſpices and embalming. His long and ſpreading beard, and graceful locks which hung upon his neck, were white, and ſhone as ſilver, as ſtruck by the faint beams of day, which entered ſome apertures in the roof. A ſhaggy mantle, the ſkin of a wild roe, cloathed his ſhoulders; and his jacket was encircled with a leathern girdle. As he reclined his head upon his hand,

one

one elbow reſted on the table; before him lay a book, an extinguiſhed lamp, and roſary; around the cell inſtruments for aſtronomy were ſcattered. In a niche formed in the wall by Nature, ſtudded and emboſs'd with ſpar and ſpangles, repreſenting amethyſts, an empty urn was placed, inſcribed, "The duſt of Paul Du' "Monte."

As Aſtianax approached, the luſtre of the onyx ſeemed to blaze upon the effigy, and every limb was agitated. A livid lambent flame ſur-

rounded all his image, and darted on his eye, like light refracted on the emerald. A voice, as one that ſpake aloft in air, call'd on Aſtianax. The voice, the apparition, renewed to him the remembrance of the Hermit in the wood. Kneeling, he replied: "Thou hallowed ſpirit of my "anceſtor, for ſuch thou ſurely art, "here am I; conducted by the "hand of Providence, I come to "ſerve thy will, and ſee the won-"derful accompliſhment of thy pre-"ſagings." The viſion raiſed his head, and, with extended arm, ſeem-

ed

ed to demand attention; when a voice was heard to ſay: "Here thou "ſhalt remain, to ſerve thy God in "prayer and meditation, until the "time ſhall be accompliſhed, which "hath been written in the book of "fate! To delight thy ſolitary "hours, peruſe this book; it will "enrich thy mind with ſcience; "and, from ſcience true religion is "derived: For, as thou advanceſt "in philoſophy, the growing ideas "will enlarge thy knowledge of the "Deity, as his wonderous works "and attributes are revealed to thy "underſtanding.

" underſtanding. On the day in
" which thou ſhalt attain the laſt of
" theſe few folios, on that day the
" will of Heaven ſhall lead thee
" hence. When thou departeſt,
" carry forth my aſhes, and let
" them reſt amidſt my anceſtors!"

As the laſt ſounds expired, the apparition quivered in each limb; and, as it ſunk, Aſtianax ſnatched off his cloak, and, ſpreading it to catch the ſacred form, received it as it waſted in a ſhower of duſt. With pious care, he lodged the hallowed remains

remains within the urn; after replacing which, bending on one knee, thus he poured forth his prayer: "Holy ſpirit of Du' Monte, thy "prophetic knowledge hitherto "foretold theſe wonderful events, "perceiving, through the courſe of "centuries unborn, this pilgrimage "of mine! if thou art not enthron-"ed in the realms of Heaven, and "far abſtracted from all cares for thy "poſterity, art reigning in the in-"effable beatitudes which await "thy virtue; but as thou foretold-"eſt, art a mediating ſpirit, pre-

"ſenting

" ſenting to the throne of mercy,
" mens petitions; O bend thy gra-
" cious care towards my Jeſſalind!
" May ſome benign ſpirit ſave her,
" and the iſſue of our love! And,
" when thy holy ſelf ſhall pay the
" adoration undefiled, which ſpirits
" only know, before the throne of
" the Divinity; let thy mediating
" interceſſions breathe in Heaven for
" theſe thy kindred! Oh! may ſhe
" be ſuſtained with ſome ſpiritu-
" al conſolation, to reconcile her
" ſoul; effacing from her memory,
" the injuries her raſh Lord hath
" done

" done her virtue; and may ſhe
" conceive, that all the dire events
" ſhe hath endured, were works
" conducing unto good, good not
" revealed, yet ordained in Heaven;
" and may her boſom entertain a
" confidence her Aſtianax ſurvives."

He ceaſed, and around the grot, innumerable voices, in ſtrains ſeraphic, ſung an hallelujah! The enraptured ſoul of Aſtianax, amidſt the melody, ſeemed to depart from its impriſonment, and quit its mortal ſenſes; taſting of tranſports far ſurpaſſing

paſſing what in human being ſhe had hitherto experienced. In a little time he became habituated to his cell: Not far diſtant ran the rill, which fill'd his daily cup; the cliffs afforded berry-bearing ſhrubs and nuts; the ſhepherds brought him milk of goats; and, facing the ſun, ſome little fertile plots he fill'd with herbs. The pleaſing pages of the book of ſcience occupied the hours, which were ſpared from his other avocations; and thus he paſs'd a life of fair tranquillity. The evening led him to his peaceful couch, where

ſleep

ſleep was uninterrupted with images ariſing from diſtempered nerves, and with the dawn he wakes.

THE prophecy being by tradition handed down amongſt the ſhepherds, the coming of Aſtianax was ſoon made known. The ſtrange event brought the aſtoniſh'd people to the cell, to pay him homage as a man divine, and offer gifts. Their pious hands ſtrewed his couch with ſkins of goats, and cloathed him with garments, ſuch as their humble life afforded. To them Aſtianax

inceſſantly was teaching moral duties; and, to their maladies, applied the ſalutary ſimples which he cultivated; thus imitating the excellencies of his predeceſſor, and emulating all his virtues; and hence, inſpiring the minds of his attendants with reverence and love. The ſons of the hoſpitable ſhepherd in the vale, from frequent intercourſe, experiencing the virtues of his ſoul, as a ſaint eſteemed him. Depending on their fidelity, and recollecting the viſion which preceded his approach to this his Hermitage, and which,

which, he apprehended, was deſigned to touch his mind with reſignation and conſolatory hopes, preſaging better fate; he often wiſh'd to ſend the young men forth, to gain intelligence, whether his Jeſſalind was yet alive, and what betided the poſſeſſions of Du' Monte: But ever, as the wiſh grew anxious, the luſtre of the onyx languiſhed, and weep'd with blood! The dire appearance was ſucceeded by contrition, for his tranſgreſſion of the maxims of his hallowed anceſtor; and all the images which hope or expectation paint-

ed on his mind, quickly were effaced; and his disturbed spirit left the ideas of the world he wished for, and from prayer regained his lost serenity.

Already were fourteen years elapsed in this abode; the book of wisdom yet remained unfinished, and the latest page of knowledge was far distant.

One morning, after his usual adoration, the same harmonious voices, which saluted Aftianax upon his arrival,

val, with the melody of Heaven;
ng a *Te Deum;* and from the sa-
ed urn, there blaz'd a livid
me, which shed the sweet perfume
eastern spices, when consumed in
cense: The gems which adorn'd
e cell, glow'd with refracted
rs, and celestial voices fill'd the
oing vaults with the strains of re-
cing.—The book of knowledge
s'd like leaves agitated by the
nd, and shewed this last most
red sentence: "The essence of all
human wisdom is religion; in pros-

" perity, it guides the giddy ſpirits
" the paths of rectitude; and in
" verſity, bleſſeth us with confide
" in God."

ASTIANAX peruſed the page;
ſooner was it read, than the bo
cloſed, and to the table beca
firmly united, part of the very a
mant itſelf. As he ſat, with lo
fixed on the ground, meditat
on the wonders to which
had been witneſs; he was
ſed by the voice of one who
l'd him by his name! As
look

looked up, behold, there ſtood before him, the apparition of his murdered friend, of Grinvil! Guilt filled his breaſt with horror; in his aſtoniſhment he let go the maxims of the book of knowledge, and cried out: "Am I then ſummoned with "thee to paſs before the judgement-"ſeat? Will not my contrition ex-"piate? Are my prayers unheard, "and ſhall not my ſoul find mercy?"

He was interrupted by the well-known voice of Grinvil, aſſuring him, his prayers were heard, that he,

he, yet living, and recovered of his wound, ſought for Aſtianax in this ſolitude, to reſtore him to the world. Aſtianax's amazement was encreaſed! He ſcarce believed his ſenſes! After a few moments, recovering himſelf, he aroſe to embrace his friend! Grinvil being ſeated, thus related his ſtory:

"A FEW days being over, after "my removal from the bath, my "wounds ſhewed ſymptoms flatter-"ing with hopes of a recovery; "but, as they yet were dangerous,

"I

" I was not ſuffered to beſtir my-
" ſelf. I improved daily, till at
" length my ſkilful ſurgeon, gave
" permiſſion to return to my own
" houſe; from whence I ſent to
" make enquiry after Aſtianax; af-
" ter Jeſſalind; after Lord Melvil!
" No intelligence could be gained of
" you: It was believed you died a
" ſuicide, and all enquiry ceaſed.
" Lord Melvil, urged to the purſuit
" of you, the fugitive, by Father
" Peter, armed a few domeſtics, and
" ranged the foreſts and the heath,
" as if he queſted wolves: They

" were

" were benighted; and, ſeeking " ſhelter under the cliffs, which " ſtand upon the crown of Mount " Avaro:"——

" Of Mount Avaro," cried Aſtianax: " There was I! That was my " hiding place! There I ſuſtained a " dreadful ſtorm! There the aven- " ging elements ſeemed to purſue " the miſcreant!"——

" Seeking ſhelter in that place," continues Grinvil, " Lord Melvil, " with two more, the chiefs of his " domeſtics,

" domeſtics, died, branded by light-
" ning!"——

ASTIANAX could not forbear to cry aloud, lifting his hands and eyes to Heaven: " How arrogantly blind
" is ſinful man, preſuming judge-
" ment in the darkeſt of his igno-
" rance! Surrounded with the ter-
" rors of the ſtorm, I deemed my-
" ſelf the mark for the enraged
" bolts; the wretch whom juſtice
" followed, armed with the brands
" of Heaven: I thought myſelf ad-
" judged to miſery! when, behold,

" the

" the very things which I called
" wretchedneſs, were given me for
" bleſſings! Had morning aroſe up-
" on us, I had fallen by the hands
" of Melvil; but, preordained for
" mighty works, here in this moun-
" tain, the will of Heaven was not
" to be confounded."——

GRINVIL went on: " Lord Mel-
" vil's retinue diſperſed, terrified and
" amazed, fled homewards, and left
" the bodies to the tempeſt. Geo-
" frey, the ſon and heir of Melvil,
" took poſſeſſion of his ſeigniories.

" Geofrey,

" Geofrey, a youth of high deport-
" ment, and a haughty ſpirit, con-
" temning the bigotry and inſolence
" of churchmen, refuſed to ſeal the
" grant of Aſtianax's eſcheated lands
" to the Benedictine monaſtery, in
" purſuance of the ſuperſtitious fol-
" ly of his father. Polidore, whoſe
" treachery was publicly ſuſpected,
" he who occaſioned all theſe dire
" calamities to your ancient houſe,
" it was he that named the hour
" and place, for me to meet him on
" the fatal day, on a pretended ur-
" gency of buſineſs. I was a ſtran-

" ger to the time when the virtuous
" Jeſſalind uſually reſorted thither.
" The plot was wound up with a
" ſoldier's reſolution, and the ſub-
" tlety of prieſts.—You know the
" reſt."——

ASTIANAX weep'd with Grinvil.—

" BUT, as to Polidore," continues Grinvil, " he, wretched man,
" was ſoon no more: Poſſeſſed of
" Father Peter's ſecrets, the miniſter
" of an abortive plot, the holy Fa-
" ther, remaining in the power of
" one

" one whoſe principles were well
" known to him, and in whoſe cha-
" racter at large, he could only place
" the momentary confidence for an
" aſſaſſin; he died the death—in the
" holy wafer it was adminiſtered—
" He departed from the altar full of
" health; and, ere it was midnight,
" he gave up the ghoſt. Receiving
" of the ſacrament in him was ſa-
" crilege: By the vengeance of an
" offended Deity, or by poiſon, he
" was ſlain."——

"But what of Jeſſalind," cries Aſtianax?——

"Of her," returns Grinvil, "I "only heard, that, retiring to the "convent where Lucia was Lady "Abbeſs, in a little time, meeting "with ſome diſguſt, ſhe retired in- "to Normandy, where ſhe is living "with her father: But whether "there is iſſue of your love, is yet "unknown to me. My coming "here (continues he) may ſeem mi- "raculous. I apprehended that, if "you could eſcape, you would have

"fled

" fled to Normandy; but the mo-
" naſtic, in Lord Melvil's name,
" had gained immediate power to
" ſearch the ports and paſſengers;
" thence all probability of that at-
" tempt was void. Fruitleſs en-
" quiries for many years, induced
" me to believe that thou wert dead;
" when by accident, as we were
" hawking in the Melſhaw downs,
" I overtook a ſhepherd, and his
" flock, proceeding ſouthward; I
" aſk'd his way, and whence he
" came; and finding that of late he
" journeyed from the mountains,

" in a part of Britain where I had
" never been, curioſity prompted
" my enquiries. Amongſt a mul-
" titude of ſtories ſuch ignorant men
" relate, of wonders which they
" have heard, I was ſtruck with
" his deſcription of Pengerard, and
" this Hermitage; but much aſto-
" niſhed, when I heard him relate
" a wonderful prophecy, which an
" Hermit, Paul Du' Monte, ſome
" centuries ago, publiſhed to the
" peaſants: And when he told me
" theſe dark ſayings were verified,
" and that the promiſed one was
" come;

" come; my ſoul preſaged, that hi-
" ther you had bent your way, and
" taken your abode: Thence I de-
" termined to viſit the place. My
" anxiety grew every hour upon
" me, and I was reſtleſs day and
" night, until I ſet forward on my
" journey."——

" And you, dear friend," replies Aſtianax, " bear a great part in the " accompliſhment of that ancient " prophecy."——

GRINVIL interrupted him, crying, "Now haſte, my friend, and "quit this gloomy cell. The field "of honour calls thee to arms: For "even now the young Lord Melvil, "with his uncles the Lords Selbourn, "and Henricks, and a mighty band "of great confederates, have ta-"ken arms againſt our Sovereign, "and march their rebel troops to-"wards the royal reſidence. This "is the ſeaſon for thee at once to "ſhew thy loyalty and valour, and "claim thy uſurped inheritance. "Some choſen troops arrive from "Normandy,

" Normandy, perhaps with them
" comes Alfred, Jeſſalind's father, to
" redreſs the injuries of his family.
" My attendants wait my coming,
" about ten miles full weſt, and
" with them ſome ſpare ſteeds well
" train'd to arms. Haſte to reaſſume
" thy honours."——

THE dream now ſtood revived upon Aſtianax's memory, and hope inſpired the pleaſing images of Jeſſalind's return: " Were it not for
" the pious duty," cries Aſtianax,
" which I owe to the ſacred memo-

" ry

" ry of Paul Du' Monte, and to
" theſe his hallowed aſhes, I would
" inſtantly accompany my friend
" towards the field of honour; But
" the angelic voice of him depart-
" ed, left me this indiſpenſable in-
" junction, *When thou goes hence,*
" *carry forth my duſt, and let it reſt*
" *amidſt my anceſtors!* Firſt per-
" mit me to fulfil his laſt requeſt,
" committed to me from the regions
" of ſpirits."——

GRINVIL was ſilent.——

AFTER

AFTER ſome preparations, they left the Hermitage, Aſtianax in his arms bearing the Urn, until they reached the retinue, which waited Grinvil's return.—As they paſs'd on, towards evening they gained a village.—Aſtianax retired to the church, and, on the altar, placed the ſacred aſhes; then proſtrate poured forth his thankſgiving to that bounteous Providence which had preſerved him thus miraculouſly. After theſe holy Offices, he retired, leaving the remains of Paul Du' Monte.

EARLY

EARLY as day break, Aſtianax again approached the altar; with reverence he laid his hands upon the Urn, to bear it on his journey; but it was become immoveable! during his aſtoniſhment, he heard a voice, commanding him to leave the aſhes there at reſt, till peace was in the land. With pious reſignation he obeyed the holy mandate, by which he was at liberty to accompany his aſſociate to the ſeat of war. He quitted the Hermit's garb, and, prepared for Deeds of arms, —his heart glowed with military

Ardour

ardour.——Furniſhed with a ſuit of armour, he aſſum'd the lance, and ſtrode the managed ſteed——hey approach'd the territories of LORD ALBON—he had call'd to arms is knights and vaſſals, and was reparing to join the royal ſtandard! —As the evening advanced, Aſtiax, with his friend, had formed eir little camp, upon the brow of an ſy eminence, where they overlook'd e vale. They determined to join ord Albon's forces in the morning; d, to that end, ſent a meſſenger

to inform him of their arrival. As Aſtianax ſate in the door of his tent, meditating on the viciſſitudes of life and the bounties of Heaven, and enjoying the delightful proſpect, with the freſhneſs of the evening, thus he expreſs'd himſelf to his friend:

"WHILST we attend to the works
"of Nature, we receive innumera-
"ble teſtimonies of the benevolence
"of that great Exiſtence, whoſe eye
"ſuperintends, and whoſe breath
"pervades the univerſe. Every
"landſcape

" landſcape is the manifeſtation of
" the preſence of its all-powerful
" Author: Every individual object
" in this ſcene bears inexpreſſible
" beauties, which exceed human
" imagination, leading us at once
" to aſtoniſhment and adoration:
" See how the velvet-verdant car-
" pet, which overſpreads the lawn,
" is embroidered with flowers, and
" fringed with ſhrubs, irregularly
" ſcattered round: The autumn
" dreſſes yonder woods in a variety
" of colours: The foliage of the
" ſhadowy ſycamore is gilded, the

" oak puts on his ruſſet, the holly
" half conceals her ripened berries
" with her evergreen, the trem-
" bling poplar mixes its ſilvery hue
" amidſt the duſky elms, and, here
" and there, thro' the thick grove,
" the white-ſkin'd birch ſeems to
" conceal its nakedneſs. Amidſt
" the windings of the woods, the
" river ſhews its ſhining lakes, where
" the glad ſpirit of the ſtreams,
" laughs at the dancing myriads
" of the ſun beams. Their fleecy
" multitudes whiten the extended
" paſture, browſing around the hil-
" locks,

" locks, and with their bleating
" wake ſolitary echo from her Silvan
" grot; all intermixed, the lazy
" oxen ſtand ſullenly, and recollect
" the flowery feaſt, whilſt the gay
" fantaſtic colts play round their
" dams, vaulting in airy ſport; and
" to their airy ſport, the dams caſt
" looks aſkance, and neigh maternal
" cautions to their frantic rounds.
" On this hand, golden furrows
" gladden the aſcent, and load the
" reapers arms with wealthy ſheafs.
" The yellow hills ſtretch out the
" diſtant view to yonder heathy

" mountains, where Barrenneſs ſits
" ſullenly, and frowns on Sloth;
" and, whilſt ſhe eyes her haggard
" boſom, furrowed over by ſtorms,
" with extended arms ſhe graſps
" the cumberous clouds, to veil her
" deſolation. Wilder the aſpect on
" the other hand, which terminates
" the proſpect; the vale extends it-
" ſelf to ſuch a diſtance, that, tinged
" with azure hue, it ſeems to mix
" with Heaven; the nearer objects
" are o'ertop'd in gay perſpective
" with objects ſtill behind. Hamlets
" and rills, and cottages delightfully
" diſperſed,

" diſperſed, and mingled with the
" various teints of trees and ſtreams,
" of paſtures, corn, and fallow.
" The church ſpire thruſts its head
" above the ſmoak which clouds
" the town; and there the ſolemn
" ruins of a caſtle nod upon the cliff
" and precipice, and tremble o'er the
" brook below, whoſe frighted Ne-
" reides hide them in the reeds which
" wave along the marſh. Oh! thou
" moſt ſplendid object, thou deſcend-
" ing orb of light, how wonderful,
" how delighting! From thy a-
" bounding glory are ſhed forth the
" golden

" golden ſtreams which paint the
" weſtern Heavens: To thy blazing
" chariot wheel gay vegetation, ever
" young, and fair fertility, with
" joys prolific wait: Now the ſlant
" ray overſtretches all the valley,
" and there, behind the hill, the
" beams ſhoot up aloft, and ſkirt
" the pale grey, and the crimſon
" clouds, with rich embroidery: But,
" whilſt we contemplate the beauties
" of the ſcene, behold, far eaſt, the
" horizon ſtands crouded with aſ-
" cending vapours; and thou day-
" imparting conſtellation, haſteneſt
" thy

" thy career, and drives the roſy-
" footed hours beneath the moun-
" tains: As objects are withdraw-
" ing from our view, another ſenſe
" finds pleaſure: The bleating of
" the ſheep, the voice of cattle
" trudging down the plain, and
" mourning for the pail, ſalute my
" ear; the ſong of yonder black-
" bird perch'd upon the thorn, the
" calling notes of every tenant of
" the ſpray; the cooing of the doves
" that lodge in duſky pines, the
" ruſtling gales which wanton with
" the aſpine leaves, the ivy-cover'd
" ſage,

" ſage, who whoots his trembling
" prayer to deities of darkneſs, the
" deep ton'd cadence of the diſtant
" water-fall, the voice of buſy men
" who bear the harveſt home, the
" clangour of the ſmith's laborious
" hammer from his hovel, the daſh-
" ing of the ſtreams which turn yon
" mill, the barking of the cottage
" cur, who waits impatiently the
" long protracted ſteps of his dear
" peaſant maſter, with the ſolemn
" ſound of curfew bell which dies
" along the dale, as thus united
" or intermixed, afford delightful
" harmony.

" harmony. Through all thy glo-
" rious works, almighty Lord, the
" enraptured ſpirit of the human
" mind wanders forth, and full of
" wonder, full of praiſe, dwells on
" each object, till in itſelf enlarged
" with the pure flame of adoration;
" through unbounded ſpace it bends
" inſpired imagination, and preſents
" itſelf proſtrate at thy throne, full
" of humiliation, reverence, and
" gratitude; paying to thy divine
" exiſtence, that worſhip which hu-
" man language never can expreſs."

GRINVIL

GRINVIL now invites his friend to ſhare a ſlight repaſt, and ſweet repoſe concludes the night. The day-ſpring calls them to their march, and ere it is noon they reach the territories of Lord Albon. A trumpeter ſalutes the ſtranger allies; they draw near the caſtle; a maſſy pile of building thrown together by various architects, all irregular and confuſed; towers joſtle towers, and battlement rides on battlement; a dark unhallowed aſpect hangs upon it. Time had dreſs'd the walls in ſable, and gaſping loops and yawning

ing grates, beſet the horrid front, and ſtrike it with the characters of ſavage times, of power uncivilized, of ſlavery, and arbitrary rule. Here the open gallery conducts to each rude tower, whoſe walls ſtand garriſoned with men of ſtone to mock the ſiege. As the ſtrangers approach the gate, the pavement ſounds beneath the horſes hoofs, and hollow arches multiply the noiſe. They croſs the draw-bridge of the ditch, and, to the trumpet's ſummons, the iron ſtudded gates roll rumbling on the maſſive hinge, and the port-

cullis, in its paſſage, harſhly grates as the watchmen heave it up. From a multitude of ſluices waters ruſh, and fill the muddy ditch. On the outward wall, men buckled up in ſteel, bearing various arms, ſpears, bills, and battle axes, ſtand arraigned, and archers throng each turret. The noiſe of buſy workmen, with ſhrill clangour, fitting harneſs, armour, and arms, is heard on every ſide! Lord Albon's extenſive ſeigniories command ſeven hundred knights, with their eſquires and retinue, together with twelve hundred

dred villains, valient men, renowned in arms, which compoſed the garriſon. Theſe were the gueſts he entertained. An herald conducted the ſtrangers to Lord Albon, where, with his knights, he ſate in council.

THE ſpacious hall received the concourſe moſt commodiouſly; ſituate within the inner court, and ſheltered from an enemy, it wore a different aſpect to the outworks. The aſcent was by an open ſtair, where ten might move abreaſt. The walls within were hung with tapeſtry,

where the hiſtorian told the atchievements of his Lordſhip's anceſtors. The windows admitted ſhadowy day, ſhining through painted glaſs, where ſhields and family-coat armour were blazoned. The painted rafters were ſuſtained by gilded effigies of Hercules, bending his bearing neck. In the gallery ſtood muſicians, on the ſtrangers approach, ſounding the ſalute. Lord Albon ſate, and on each ſide a rank of knights armed *cap à pè;* behind each of whom ſtood an eſquire-bearing the ſhield, ſtained or engraven

with

with the ſeveral devices of their proper arms. Between the ranks Grinvil and Aſtianax mov'd on, their retinue halting at the foot. Theſe ranks form a gloomy avenue of armour, an arrangement of ſteel ſtatues, and burniſh'd images. As the ſtrangers paſs, the lances were bent down by each ſaluting knight. The agitated plumes toſs'd on each helmet's brow, and from the moving joints of every gauntlet and each coat of mail, a harſh and horrid din re-echoed in the hall. They approach Lord Albon, whoſe noble figure

ſtruck each ſtranger with reſpectfulneſs. His armour poliſhed and black as adamant, was flowered and figured with inlaid gold! His cuiraſs, like the ſcales of dragons, ſhone with burniſh'd ſilver; and, round his collar, and on every joint, the ſtuds were diamonds! On his helmet plumes of ſcarlet waved, and, at his thigh, a ſcimitar ſuſpended in a belt of gold embroidery, blazed with precious ſtones! He graciouſly received the viſiters, retained them with their retinue in his corps, and ſate them one on each hand to attend

tend in council. From his uplifted beaver, Lord Albon ſhewed a benevolent countenance, and, from his dark grey eyes, ſhot forth intelligence. The news brought by the ſcouts and ſpies related, that the royal army was moving towards the rebels, which ſhewed that the battle was not far off. After a farewel repaſt, it was reſolved to march and join the royal ſtandard. The ample board was ſpread, the ſeats were placed along the hall, and every officious 'ſquire unbraced the buckler, and removed the helmet with a din

of

of arms tumultuous and confuſed; as the ſound of hail, when in a haſty ſtorm, it falls upon the leafy foreſt: And now each hero's countenance revealed with gracious ſmiles; they greet the ſtrangers. The table was encumbered with the meſs: With every dainty of this luxurious land the diſhes ſwell'd! The foreſt and the chace poured forth their ſtores; the paſture and the ſtreams their ſtock: The ſervice was in ſilver, and a thouſand diſhes ſtood ſmoaking with the rich repaſt! The ſun beams glazed upon the

arms,

arms, and danced upon the ſplendid feaſt, which far outſhone the pomp of ancient Rome. With officious care the board was cleared by multitudes of well taught ſlaves; and ſtraight in porcelain were placed fruits, paſtry, and variety of ſweet meats, ſerved to the gueſts with knives and ſpoons of ſolid gold! The muſicians fill'd the air with martial melody, and, from the flowing cup, the ſparkling wines were quaffed. After the feaſt was ended, they prepare for march, and in ſome days they join the royal army.

Within

Within ſight, the rebels lay encamped upon an eminence ſo near, that, from the outpoſts, the paſſing of the watch was heard, the neighing of the ſteeds, and one confuſed murmuring of the voice of buſy troops, mixed with the clang of arms. The King commanded in perſon, and to the royal tent the allies being introduced, were ſtationed in the right wing of the army. No Norman troops were in the field, detained by adverſe winds, they had not diſembarked. Orders were iſſued for the next day's attack, and all the troops

troops were under arms. A ſpacious plain laid extended between the armies, hem'd in by hills upon the left, and to the right a deep moraſs. Each with ditches and high mounds of earth lay in their camp entrenched! The mind of brave Aſtianax, an utter ſtranger to emotions of fear, employed itſelf in thoughts divine: Humane compaſſion for his fellow creatures mov'd his ſoul: He viewed, with anxious eye, the long extended camp, ſtretching its ſtorm bleach'd canvaſs o'er the hill: "How "many worthy men, whoſe hearts

"beat

" beat ardently for honour, ere to-
" morrow's ſun ſhall ſet, will ſleep
" in death? How many valiant ſpi-
" rits, through a wreck of wounds,
" will pour themſelves into eternity?
" How many widowed eyes muſt
" weep? How many orphans groan
" beneath adverſity? Oh! curſed
" ambition, firſt introduced by Sa-
" tan to the ſouls of men! A ſimple
" woman's paſſion, a paſſion with
" which ſimple woman firſt conta-
" minated ſeduced man! A fooliſh
" name for avarice! Unlawful wiſh
" for other mens fair honours and
" poſſeſſions!

" poſſeſſions! Eſſence of Lucifer;
" the contrariety of Heaven; whoſe
" hand writes on the world, *univer-*
" *ſal benevolence!* What crimes are
" infolded in thy girdle? What
" wretchedneſs is encloſed in thy
" graſp? The circling zodiac; the
" belt of Heaven is ſcarce thy boun-
" dary! Oh! ambition! in thy il-
" legitimacy, foſter'd by rebellion,
" whither doſt thou ſtretch thy ra-
" ven wing, and bend thy boding
" flight? On whoſe raven wing
" not one white plume, or one fic-
" titious mark of juſtice ſhines; but

" all is fable as the curtain which
" conceals the damn'd! What ha-
" vock ſhall ſtalk forth amongſt man-
" kind? What horrid ſlaughter ſtain
" thy ſullen creſt, ere once the ſun
" ſhall circle us; and, o'er the book
" of fate, the ſorrowing Seraph who
" enrolls the day, will dip his pen
" in blood, in maſſacre, in wrong,
" in ſpoil, in deſolaton? But Pro-
" vidence permits theſe errors of
" mankind, and perhaps permits
" them in compaſſion to the dying!
" For man, in this eſtate, is on a
" pilgrimage from birth to death!
" muſt

" muſt paſs the ills of life to purge
" him from thoſe defilements of ſin
" original! ſin of the ſpirit in its
" primeval ſtate! As the ore is caſt
" into the furnace and reduced to
" litharge, ere the refiner pours it
" forth in burniſh'd gold! We, with
" mere mortal ſenſe, view the events
" of life through mediums deceitful!
" We call the horrors of peſtilence,
" and the havock of the war, as
" ſcourges that are wielded in the
" hand of ſome avenging angel—
" perhaps we err—perhaps they are
" the mode of clemency profuſe,

"a clemency which calls in thou-
"ſands of men from out their miſe-
"ry; giving ſhort date to their ca-
"lamities, and leading them into a
"realm of joy.—Good Lord, thy
"will be done!"

EARLY as the dawn, the royal ar-my takes the field, and heralds paſs, to call the foe to battle. The rebels, waiting for a tardy reinforcement, loiter in their entrenchments; till braved by the left wing, who ſeize the outward works, and ſhower their arrows on the foe; impatient in

in their reſtraint, receiving unretaliated wounds, they leap the trench. Lord Melvil, with the confederate chiefs, perceive their raſhneſs, and compelled with their main army to ſuſtain them, the battle becomes general. Aſtianax, with Grinvil, fought ſide by ſide. Aſtianax's armour turned aſide the javelin and arrow; and the proved falchion made no impreſſion on his coat of mail! Grinvil did wonders! His charge was rapid as the lightning, and thought itſelf could not outſtrip his guard! At length, his javelin was

ſhiver'd in the aſſault, and, to his truſty ſword, he yielded all his valour! Long he fought, and vanquiſh'd every oppreſſing foe! But fate had wrote his doom; and he receiv'd an arrow through the plaits of his cuiraſs, a ſlant way ſhot, which pierced him underneath the arm, and rendered his ſword no longer ſerviceable: He was compelled to retreat; and, meeting Aſtianax, who ſlaughtered like a peſtilence, and cut his paſſage through the ranks wherever he aſſaulted; he, ſeeing his friend was wounded, forebore the

havock

havock, and retired to guard him to ſome ſafer ſpot, where the ſurgeons might withdraw the barb, and dreſs the wound. His friendly office once accompliſhed, Aſtianax flew back to join the battle. Providence ordained, that he ſhould fill the moſt momentuous inſtant! The King, from his raſh ardour, ruſhing too far, became encircled by a troop of choiceſt foes; ſuſtained only by a few, who, overpowered, were falling round him, had already thought himſelf a priſoner; when, to the victorious phalanx, Aſtianax puſh'd

on

on his ſteed: He fretted on the bit, and ſnuff'd the air impatiently, as conſcious of the glory he ſhould win. The crucifix upon Aſtianax's boſom blazed like a paſſing comet, and bedim'd the gazers eye! Deſtruction rode on every ſide, and gave him paſſage. The royal arm, the rebel hand had that inſtant reſted; that inſtant to Aſtianax's falchion fell the ſacrilegious hand, and ſcorn'd the miſerable wretch who had abuſed its valour! Courage revived within the rallying guard! In the right wing, the cry of victory reſounded!

The

The centre puſhes on, and joins the King. The rebels, from deſpair, now fought with madneſs!

ASTIANAX was foremoſt in the field for deeds of valour! One competitor alone fought for the King, and almoſt equal'd the hero in his claim for glory! Mounted on a dappled roan, a gallant ſteed, that toſs'd his ſilver main aloft in air, a young man braved the greateſt terrors of the war! The red teints on his horſe's gloſſy ſkin, ſeem'd like a ſhower of blood! A crimſon plume

covered

covered his helmet, and crimſon ribbons bound his armour: Amidſt the carnage of his ſword, he was known only by the name of the Bloody Knight! Where'er the foes ruſh'd on, and gained upon the royal troops, there he attacked! and, when the fury of the deſpairing rebels made the battle the moſt ſanguine, then, amidſt the ranks, he forced his way, and, meeting with Lord Melvil, braved him to engage; unhors'd him, and, amidſt his amazed vaſſals, ſevered his head from off his body; and bore it by the hair

hair aloft to view! The ſpectacle diſmayed the rebel troops;—they fled!—Whilſt he approach'd the King, and made the offering which enſured the peace! The rout was general!

THE King ſent forth an herald through his army, commanding the two valiant ſtrangers to attend him in his tent. The Bloody Knight obeyed the ſummons; but Aſtianax had left the field, to viſit his friend: Grinvil was ſtill alive, but languiſh'd in his wound, which then portend-

ed

ed inevitable death. He received Aſtianax, and heard his deſcription of the battle, with a ſmile. Amidſt the circumſtances of the fight, the Bloody Knight engaged Aſtianax's wonder and applauſe: He dwelt upon his valour with a partial pleaſure: "But," cries he, "what moſt "aſtoniſhes, is the device he wore "upon his ſhield; he bare a lion ar-"gent on a bloody field, ſupported "on a riſing golden ſun; the coat "of the Du' Montes."—Grinvil interrupts: "Could this be a ſon of "thine, my friend!" "Oh! flatter-

"ing

"ing thought," replies Aſtianax,
"but empty and deluſive! Had he
"been my ſon, he would have
"quartered Alfred's arms; that
"ſtrange device, a ſavage tearing
"up a pine. But now, my friend,
"(ſays Aſtianax), let me conduct
"you to the neighbouring town,
"where you may reſt commodiouſ-
"ly, and have the ableſt ſurgeons
"in the army to attend your wound.
"From thence, I will immediately
"repair to execute the will of Paul
"Du' Monte; and, when the pi-
"ous office is accompliſhed, I will

" approach the King, and ſeek, as " a reward, the reſtitution of my " lands."

BEFORE Aſtianax departed from his friend, Grinvil, apprehenſive of the approach of death, thus addreſs'd him: " Oh! Aſtianax, my " friend, my kinſman; if thou feel- " eſt affection for me, remember my " dear Livia, my ſiſter. The fates " decree a period to thy ſorrows: " The happy days approach, in " which thy toils and ſufferings will " end. Then think of me. To thy " care,

" care, I give the beauteous maid.
" She will inherit all my poſſeſſions;
" and, with that ſufficiency, will
" diſplay the bright, the illuſtrious
" excellencies of her ſoul. For ſhe
" hath virtues which ſurpaſs moſt
" of her ſex. Then Aſtianax:"—
He pauſed.——

" What would my friend require
" of me?" cries Aſtianax.——

" If thou haſt a ſon, O let her
" aſylum be thy regard."——

After theſe words, the friends both remained ſilent. Aſtianax relieved the anxious moment of deep thought, and, claſping his friend's hand, aſſured him of his protection of the fair Livia: "Whatever be "my fate," adds he, "ſhe ſhall be "as a daughter to me."——

Grinvil returned his friendſhip with tears, and, on his hand, imprinted kiſſes. Alas! the laſt imprinted kiſſes of his life! Theſe faithful friends embraced, and bid adieu!

Astianax

ASTIANAX haſted to the village where the ſacred aſhes of his anceſtor were reſted. The King, after publiſhing a general pardon to the rebels who came in and ſwore allegiance, diſperſed his army, and removed his court to York.

LORD Morton, who was a favourite with the King, was of a ſoul benevolent, as exalted with ſcience. He rejoiced in rewarding virtue, whereſoever he diſcovered it. The valour of the Bloody Knight had fired his mind with admiration and eſteem.

He ſent to invite him to his tent, and, with a courteouſneſs peculiar to his character, engaged the heroic youth, with his attendants, to his caſtle; from whence, after a few days repoſe, he promiſed to conduct him to court; there to receive the royal bounty promiſed by his Majeſty after the victory.

Lord Morton was deſirous of knowing the quality of this ſtranger, in order that he might council him, what was the fitteſt requeſt to offer to the throne; as his Majeſty had

had left him to his option, in what manner he ſhould honour him.—Thus he related the circumſtances of his life:

"I AM of Normandy, the grand-
"ſon of Alfred, a man of ancient
"family. By my father's ſide, I
"am a lineal deſcendant of the Duke
"of Belfort, whoſe honours and
"domains were granted by the
"Norman William, for his valiant
"ſervices. In a ſucceeding reign,
"Lord Alexander giving diſpleaſure
"to the King, in not coinciding in

"ſome

" ſome pernicious meaſures, was be-
" trayed by a ſervile miniſter, to gra-
" tify the royal reſentment; was im-
" peached, and, with his head, loſt
" the vaſt territories, and the title
" of his anceſtors. Lord Alexander
" had a younger brother, who poſ-
" ſeſſed an ample fortune, and was
" owner of an eſtate and manſion,
" which, from his family name, was
" called Du' Monte. This eſtate
" deſcended to my father; but,
" from the malevolence and avarice
" of a crafty prieſt, the principal of
" the Benedictine monaſtery; and,

" from

" from his own youthful impetuo-
" ſity, he entertained a groundleſs
" jealouſy againſt my mother; and,
" ſeeking revenge for his miſtaken
" wrongs, he ſlew his kinſman Grin-
" vil; a man of ſpotleſs fame; and
" with my mother innocent of the
" alledged crime. Lord Melvil ha-
" ving the ſeigniory, ſeized the
" lands. My father fled, and died an
" obſcure death. My mother, then
" pregnant with me, retired into a
" convent, where a relation was the
" Abbeſs. My father's eſtates were
" to be granted by Lord Melvil to

" the

" the monaſtery of St Benedict, in
" conſequence of a vow extorted
" from the terrors of his troubled
" conſcience. The principal of the
" monaſtery had concerted the hor-
" rid plot; all the treachery flowed
" from him; and Lord Melvil's
" bigotry was to have rewarded the
" crime. As Providence directed,
" the grant remained unſealed, when
" a ſudden death took off Lord Mel-
" vil. The diſappointment drove
" the monk to madneſs: For many
" years a raving horror harrowed
" up his ſoul; and, in his malady,

" the

" the moſt diſtracting deſperation
" wore down his carcaſs to the
" grave. My mother, overwhelmed
" with her diſtreſſes, would have re-
" mained amongſt the nuns, had not
" my approaching birth obliged her
" to retire into the arms of Alfred.
" Soon after her arrival in Norman-
" dy, I was born. I was named
" Leo Du' Monte. From my in-
" fancy, my conſtant reſidence has
" been with my grandfather; till
" the rumour of this inſurrection
" induced me to take up arms, and
" ſeek for honour, under the Britiſh
ſtandard.

" ſtandard. My mother would at-
" tend me, determining, if I ſhould
" fall in battle, that ſhe would re-
" tire into a convent. Adverſe winds
" ſeparated the little fleet in which
" we ſailed, with ſome few Norman
" troops. My mother, with her
" attendants, were drove back,
" whilſt the bark in which I ſailed,
" fortunately made land. The hand
" of Heaven ſuſtained me in the bat-
" tle; and, from the royal bounty,
" with Lord Morton's influence, I
" doubt not but I ſhall regain the
" poſſeſſions of my father. But, be

" that

" that as it proves, I think myſelf
" fortunate, that juſtice wielded my
" ſword, and young Lord Melvil
" fell beneath my arm!"

Lord Morton found himſelf greatly intereſted in the young champion's hiſtory; and, during the relation, his regard for virtue moved his reſolves. At length, they prepare to attend the court: Lord Morton introduced the valiant Leo, having related to the King in his cloſet, the hero's hiſtory. The eſſential ſervices he had rendered the

ſtate, together with the interceſſions of Lord Morton, for whoſe great power and good offices, he was not to depart the throne diſſatisfied; induced the King, of his royal munificence, to reſtore to Leo Du' Monte, the poſſeſſions of his anceſtors, and the title of the Duke of Belfort.

WHILST theſe tranſactions were paſſing, Aſtianax having reach'd the church where the hallowed duſt of Paul Du' Monte was depoſited. On his knees, before the altar, he reaſſumed his pious duty; and, in

ſlow

ſlow journeyings, bearing the urn, he bent his way over the heights, the neareſt paſſage to the manſion of Du' Monte.

GRINVIL's wound, beyond the power of ſurgery, proved mortal; and he ſlept with his anceſtors.

ASTIANAX, in his way, paſſing over mountains, deſerts, and dreary wilds; one day, towards evening, found himſelf embarraſſed by a haſty river, which ſhewed no tokens of its being paſſable, until the flood

ſubſided, which had ſwelled the ſtream. He ſtood upon the banks for ſome time irreſolute whether to purſue the current: The noiſe of water-falls ſtruck his ear, he followed the ſound, and entered into a bay, formed by nature, of ſtupendous rocks. The night drew on. In this ſecure receſs he determined to remain till morning: His ſervants pitched their tents upon the hill. The novelty of the ſcene afforded him delight; the high cliffs under which he ſat, were porphyry; the apertures every where were

grown

grown with ſhrubs; on the brow, rude oaks extended their old miſhapen arms o'er the bay, and form'd a lofty ſhade. The continued rocks encloſed a ſpacious amphitheatre, in ſome parts, ſtanding erect like maſſive pillars, in others, ſhaken and irregular, as rude as native chaos; ſuſpended in a tremenduous manner over their baſe, and threat'ning inſtant ruin. Here and there the ſable yews grew on the cliffs, and, o'er the precipice, the trunks of ſtorm-torn trees hung woven round with ivy, whoſe fantaſtic branches

play'd pendant in every gale. In the centre of this rocky circle, ſtood divided from the reſt, a mighty pile, bearing the image of ſome fortreſs; on either ſide of which, a foaming cataract, the whole river's flood, precipitated an hundred fathom. The ſounding waters eddy'd in the deep and diſmal gulph which received the falling floods, and every cavern yielded a hollow groan.—— The diſtracted ear admitted no other voice, but the uproar of the impetuous water God, who bellowed

lowed in the lake his haſty laws to the aſtoniſhed ſtreams. So Vulcan's voice reſounded in the noiſy forges of the Cyclops.

As night advances forth from the chambers of the eaſt, the moon aſcends, and ſilvers the light vapour. And now ſurmounting every ſhade, rufulgent rides the azure firmament. In her fair aſpect, meekneſs ſeems to reign in regions of tranquillity: So conſcious virtue ſmiles within a ſoul ſerene: Her countenance, like fair content, diffuſes peace;

peace; and her pale rays, as moderation ſhining clear, but cool. No ruffling winds range through the heavy air, but all above is ſtillneſs, all below is horrid tumult! Aſtianax here ſeated, in his mind revolves the various changes of his life, the darkneſs of futurity, the obſcure meaning of the prophecy, the improbability of his reſtoration to the honours of his family, at the time when the aſhes of Paul Du' Monte ſhould reſt in the tomb of his anceſtors.

MEDITATION

MEDITATION formed this ſcene for her abode; and, in this ſeaſon, ſhe delights to walk abroad under the pale beams of the midnight moon: She fills the recollection with a croud of ſubjects, and leads a train of young ideas forth, forming their progreſs from the charts of old experience: Her laſt reſult is confidence in Heaven: For, when imagination's wandering viſions have exhauſted fancy, the undetermined thought comes weary home, and lodges in the haunts of hope,

hope, refreſhed by holy faith in Providence; whoſe paths myſterious lead to paths of peace.

SUCH ideas cloſed his waking thoughts—he ſlept—When there aroſe, to his aſtoniſhed fancy, viſions by ſupernatural creation, preſented to his entranced ſpirit.

ON high ſat Juſtice, in her garb ſeraphic, ſuſpended on a pale grey cloud: The rays which blazed on her celeſtial form, glowed in the vapoury couch, and ſkirted it with ſilver.

ſilver. Deep in the hollow of the dreary rock ſat Malice, like a wolf, enraged by hunger, haunching at the chains which bind her to her cell. With eyes which ſeem'd to weep the pureſt cryſtal, ſtood Treachery transformed to ſtone, and petrified with her own tears. Avarice ſtood oppoſite, a haggard form extending withered arms, and graſping at the air. Beneath their feet, pale Envy ſhewed her ſickly face, and drew along her ſqualid form, that lengthened out a crawling nauſeous ſerpent. Deep in the horrid

rid whirlpool roll'd in torture; Superſtition, over whoſe head the cataract, inceſſantly poured down its filthy torrent, ſtained with the blood of martyrs and of maſſacres, and polluted with the ſins of ages. Whilſt bending o'er the brink, behold Hypocriſy pregnant with monſters, who, in their birth, torture and revile the agonizing demon in the lake. The miniſters of Juſtice calling forth eternal night, ſhe ſpreads her ſhadowy wing to hide the viſion from the eye of Heaven, and,

and, in oblivion's ſable mantle, gathers them up.

THE morning wakes Aſtianax with her roſy finger: The ſun ſurmounts the horizon: Theſe viſions were eſteemed, in his interpretation, as the revelation of his concluded ſorrows; as his former dream preſaged the progreſs of his redemption from the dreary ſolitude of Mount Pengerard. As down the channel he purſues his way, from the cataract a ſhower of ſpray is driven round the bay; on which the ſun's

oppoſing rays, with lights diviſibility, ſpreads a painted bow upon the waters, which emulates the robe of Iris, when bearing tidings to the earth, of God's benevolence; ſhe comes ſaluting the new born ſmiling ſpring with fertilizing ſhowers. Through this lucid portico he paſſed, and ſoon arrived in a cultivated country, where open roads rendered his journey expeditious. His labours drew towards their concluſion. He reach'd the well known valley, where ſtood the manſion of Du' Monte! Alas! how changed! The

Benedictine

Benedictine monaſtery was laid in aſhes; and ſmoaking ruins alone denote its ſituation! Being proved a nurſery of the rebellion, by royal mandate laid in deſtruction, and its poſſeſſions confiſcated! The woods, the groves, the old patrician oaks, which once had graced the manſion of his father; and had enjoyed two centuries and more, of far extended wealth and ſplendour, were no more! The fatal hand of Deſolation had laid low the long ſtretched avenue! and one confuſed ruin mark'd the ſpot where once the

dwelling ſtood, ſave one wing alone, which had ſuſtain'd the ſhock of time, and ſav'd the gallery where once Aſtianax was miraculouſly ſaved! With tears he viewed the waſte! Amongſt the ruins, he attempts his way! At his approach, the doors which had remained ſhut up for years, as if ſhook by tempeſts, ſpontaneouſly gave way! He gains the gallery! Shrouded and concealed by duſt and ruins, the armour of his anceſtor trembled! Thence there ſeem'd to awake, a ſlumbering pelican, which ſat ſupported

ported on the caſque, and ſhook its ſnowy plumes; then ſtretching forth its fair white wings, as if preparing for her flight, on either ſide the vaſt extended plumage reach'd, diſplaying all her ample breaſt, where every ſilver feather ſhone, ſpotleſs and burniſh'd as the Seraph's heavenly buckler, when he ſtands array'd in the glowing arms of light; with a mighty ſound ſhe took her way aloft, and, as ſhe mounted to the realms of Heaven, a lucid train, ſuch as the ſun beams ſhoot from

out the evening cloud, traced her paſſage to the ſkies.

ASTIANAX, gazing upon the viſion, breathed this ſhort ejaculation: "Bleſſed ſpirit of the mighty Nor-"ban, have the labours of Aſtianax "gained thy approbation? Have "theſe accompliſhed toils procured "thee peace? Is the hour at hand, "which ſhall reſtore thee to the "regions of felicity?"

ASTIANAX ſummoned the eccleſiaſtics of the ſeveral adjoining houſes,

houſes, to attend him to the church of Saint Paul, their to reſt the aſhes of his anceſtor! The villagers, a mighty concourſe, throng around in ſilent reverence! Through the ſeparating ranks of prieſts, Aſtianax approach'd the vault, in his arms bearing the urn; behind him, an attendant carried the arms of Norban! The heavy gates which cloſed the cell, moved ſtiff! The harſh ſounds wind along the wide extended arches! The repoſitory of the ancient family of Du' Montes, was revealed to the ſpectators; where,

for

for ſucceſſive centuries, heroes and ſages ſlept! The ſolemn ſcene ſtruck every eye with reverence and holy awe! Around ſtood ranged the cells where the deceaſed lay depoſited, each cloſed with marble, on which the name and character of every one inter'd, ſtood graven! Above were placed the effigies and arms; by time and damp, cloathed with a ſable veil, in mournful order, pointing out the long ſucceſſions of the ſpoil of death. The laſt, ſtands Periander!

With down caſt eyes Aſtianax paſs'd on, and, in its proper cell, depoſited the remains of Paul Du' Monte, and hung aloft the arms of Norban: Then, bending to the earth, he cries aloud:

"Ye ſacred manes of my father, "ye ſpirits of my anceſtors, hal- "lowed be ye in Heaven! If ye "regard the affairs of your poſteri- "ty, accept this filial duty; and, "in your prayers to the Omnipo- "tent, for us and our ſucceſſors, in- "tercede! Pray that we, perceiving

"what

" what is acceptable, may deviate
" no more! Pray that we may, in
" all our days, have preſent with
" our hearts, each excellence, and
" every virtue of our parents; and
" for our emulation their examples!
" Let our memory of them be full
" of gratitude, and full of love!
" Lively in our recollection, may
" their tenderneſs and care for ever
" live, and be our days one univer-
" ſal ſcene of filial affection! And
" thou moſt mighty God, whoſe
" bounties are equal'd only by thine
" omnipotence, on whoſe finger ſits

" the

" the ſtary zodiac as a ring; and
" by whoſe mighty arm creation is
" ſuſpended! Thee to adore, is
" man's inceſſant duty, thou great
" parent of the univerſe! As our
" ſouls are warmed with gratitude
" and love to our terreſtrial parents,
" thence let our thoughts aſcend to
" thee, replete with holy reverence:
" Conſcious of thine exalted good-
" neſs, thy long ſufferings, and in-
" numerable mercies, extended un-
" to all mankind: And, whilſt we,
" reviewing all thy divine munifi-
" cence to man, and meaſuring our

" own

" own unworthineſs, by thy ineſti-
" mable bounties, may we adore
" thee a gracious Being, with pureſt
" piety and contrite hearts! And,
" when thou wouldſt that we ſhould
" pray, correct the blindneſs of our
" wiſhes with propriety, and let
" our petitions become acceptable;
" and may our ſupplications, diveſt-
" ed of all arrogance, be anſwered
" with thy paternal love. Extend
" unto us, Lord, the gift of grace;
" ſuſtain us in the hour of mortal
" woe; and, when this expiring
" frame ſhall ſink to reſt on the ma-
" ternal

" ternal lap of earth; grant that,
" through the propitiation of thy ſon,
" we may become partakers in the
" enjoyment of that ineffable beati-
" tude, which awaits thoſe whom
" thou approveſt."

THEN, raiſing himſelf from off the earth, he cries: " Heaven's will " be done." Straight was heard celeſtial melody which fill'd the air; the voices of a multitude of chaunters ſinging to the harp, and pronouncing: " Praiſed be thy name, " O Lord, for all thy mercies ſhewn " to man on earth, of whom thou

" takeſt ſuch abundant care, and un-
" to angels deſigns to equal them."

AMIDST the hallelujah, and the chorus, Aſtianax lifted up his face, and, to the ſtrain, accompanied his voice. Forth from the urn a livid lambent flame aroſe, which ſhot its quivering point aloft, and fill'd the vault with fragrance. On the breaſt of Aſtianax, the onyx ſpread a blaze of light, ſuch as ſurrounded the heavenly form of Gabriel, when ſped to earth on errands of divine import, to patriarchs of old.

OVER the urn two cherubs, with their lucid pinions, hovered; and, catching the aſcending flame, wafted it to Heaven: Whilſt all above, the choir of aereal voices, with the ſounds of many trumpets, ſung his *requiem*.

AT the opening of the vault, there appeared a youth of noble port, in rich apparel, with a croud of gay attendants. Silent, and in aſtoniſhment, he ſtood, with projected figure and extended hands, now gazing on Aſtianax, then on the urn,

devouring every ſentence! The vulgar, all behind, trembling at theſe miraculous events, ſtood mute in reverence! The youth never yet preſumed to expreſs his wiſh of knowing the cauſe of what he ſaw; neither could he bear to look intent upon Aſtianax, who ſeem'd of a celeſtial form—a miniſter of light!

As Aſtianax, with the eccleſiaſtics, departed the vault, he obſerved a perſon entering the church, attended by a mighty croud of men, in whoſe countenances ſat feſtivity and joy.

The

The aereal melody, as if ſuſpended on the breeze, gradually departed, and the diſtant and decreaſing ſounds, ſlowly died upon the ear.

On nearer approach, Lord Albon, who led the jocund band, recollected Aſtianax to be the knight who had accompanied him to the war; and Aſtianax immediately knew his noble hoſt. They approach to ſalute each other: The rays of the onyx confounded Lord Albon; they were too radiant for his eye to gaze on! He ſtopt——He thought he ſaw the

ſpirit of his friend, deck'd in angelic luſtre! But Aſtianax relieved his confuſion; and cries out: "My noble "Lord, this meeting affords me in- "finite delight. My pilgrimage is "ended: My vow is fulfiled: Be- "hold, I have borne the aſhes of the "Hermit, Paul Du' Monte, to this "their reſting place! And, my Lord, "the will of Providence ſends forth "unhop'd for circumſtances to aid "the completion of the prophecy. "Hence, departing, I ſhall approach "the throne, and crave from royal "bounty, the reſtoration of my loſt "poſſeſſions:

" poſſeſſions: To aid which pur-
" poſe, I beg your Lordſhip's inte-
" reſt and interceſſion."

THEY ſalute the ſtranger youth; the ſtranger youth returns the bow; and was about to inquire in whoſe preſence it was he ſtood; but thus Lord Albon interrupts:——

" AND you, my valiant knight,
" (ſays he, to Aſtianax), from whoſe
" puiſſant ſword ſuch havock fell;
" ſuch noble deeds of arms! You
" came, as ſent by Heaven, on this
" illuſtrious

" illuſtrious day, at once, to finiſh
" all your pious labours; and grace
" my nuptials! For this day I ſhall
" eſpouſe a captive, taken after the
" battle, of whom I grew enamour-
" ed. I took her from a band of
" ruffians, who guarded her, and a
" train of impious eccleſiaſtics, by
" whom ſhe was accompanied;
" bearing the ſhrine and relicks of
" St Benedict, in ſupplications for
" their Sovereign's overthrow! She
" would conceal her real character;
" and ſays, that in the perils of the
" day, as ſhe advanced towards the

" field

" field of battle, to ſecure herſelf
" from a band of plundering rebels,
" ſhe ſought refuge with the monks!
" From the humour of the female
" mind, which human wiſdom ne-
" ver could decypher, no other
" place muſt witneſs to our vows
" but this! To female will, con-
" tention is ridiculous, as blows
" bent on the wind! Hither I con-
" duct her, to experience better
" fortune, and partake of all my
" honours! See, as I ſpeak, ſhe
" comes!"

At that inſtant, a troop of ladies entered; as they advanced, Aſtianax thought he recollected her, who, hand in hand, came with the perſon dreſſed in bridal robes! A young maid of excellent beauty! As nearer they approach, he perceived ſhe was the fair Livia, the ſiſter of his departed friend! The dying petition of Grinvil renewed upon his memory! He recollected, that unſearchable are the ſecret paths thro' which Providence brings on the decrees of Heaven; and he already apprehend-

ed,

ed, it was the will of fates, that he ſhould make this maid his wife!

THE proceſſion now approaches to the altar, before them, virgins ſcattered flowers; and, in the train, ſoft voices ſung the bridal ſong, attuned to the lute! The bride, with downcaſt eyes, appear'd abaſhed; and, ſhedding tears, endeavoured to conceal her diſconcerted looks; nor raiſed one glance towards her Lord, who ſtood exulting in the happy moment! And, in whoſe breaſt the rapid tides of joy beat to his bound-

ing

ing heart! — The officiating prieſt advanced.

THE bride, with collected reſolution, at length looks up. Her looks ſtruck on Aſtianax, the luſtre of whoſe amulet had reach'd her eye! She ſtarted! ſtretch'd her arms to catch aſſiſtance! ſhriek'd and fell! And, as ſhe fell, from her fair hand there drop'd a dagger, which ſhe had concealed, to prevent the odious eſpouſal! Odious, as contrary to inclination!

THE congregation were filled with aſtoniſhment! Lord Albon trembled! All but Aſtianax, and the young ſtranger, were ſtruck with horror! They, as being actuated by one mind, at the ſame inſtant, ruſhed forward; and, ſtretching forth their arms, ſuſtained her in her ſwoon! Kneeling, they raiſed her returning ſpirits, opened her quivering eyes! The young ſtranger, with Aſtianax's voice uniting, mix'd the varied exclamation of "O! ſave my mother!" "Oh! ſave my Jeſſalind! my wife!"

At theſe words, her alarmed ſpirits brought back her agitated ſenſes! She looks on one, and then upon the other: The ſilence of an inſtant is interrupted by her voice, repeating: "My huſband! and my "ſon! My Aſtianax! and my Leo! "Are we in the regions of death? "or are we ſtill on earth? Aſtoniſh-"ment! yet an aſtoniſhment of "heavenly import."

Lord Albon thought himſelf abuſed, and called to his attendants for his ſword: "Here are tricks," cries he,

he, "and ſubtleties, and holy frauds, "which interpoſe between me and "my purpoſe, and would deprive "me of my bridal joys. This pi- "ous knave, who, in his treachery, "uſurps a huſband's title, ſhall be "the firſt to feel my indignation! "Here, my ſword! Vaſſals, my "ſword!" He graſp'd Aſtianax by the collar!

THE inſtant he laid his hands upon him, a dreadful clap of thunder burſt above their heads! The air was red with lightning! The church

rock'd on its pillars: "Demons, I "defy you," cries the enraged Lord: "All, all the tricks of this magician! "all his ſorceries!"

THE ſurpriſe and terror again threw Jeſſalind into great emotions. She fell upon the boſom of the young ſtranger, and wept! The youth ſtretched forth his hand, entreating Lord Albon to ſuſpend his anger, until theſe wonderful circumſtances were explained; aſſuring him, that the intended bride was his mother; and craving her to decypher the remaining myſteries.

THE

THE explanation ſoon was given. Lord Albon's rage ſubſided: He was convinced this was more than artifice; and, correcting impaſſioned wiſhes with propriety of judgement, his excellencies of ſoul were renewed in all their benevolence and honour. He join'd the hands of Aſtianax and Jeſſalind!

THE youth kneeling, implanted kiſſes on the hands united: "Fa-
"ther," cries he, "bleſs me with
"your pardon; ignorant that you
"ſtill lived, I have abuſed the boun-
"ty of the throne; I have uſurp'd
"the

" the name of Belfort! This ducal " title, theſe eſtates, theſe honours, " they appertain to you; and at " your feet I here reſign them! I " will immediately preſent my pe- " tition to the crown, for their re- " moval."

ASTIANAX raiſing him, claſp'd him to his enraptured boſom: " Enjoy thy honours, worthy youth!" cries he, " Enjoy the rewards of " thy valour, and thy virtue! The " manſion of Du' Monte, and theſe " demains, are all I ever wiſh'd for, " or will poſſeſs."

JESSALIND

JESSALIND relieved her ſon from Aſtianax's embrace; and, on her neck, received his tears of tranſport!

THE general confuſion ſtood becalm'd in general aſtoniſhment and joy!

LORD Albon thus addreſſed them: "Above the ſelfiſh ſentiments of "partiality for my own happineſs, "ſincere joy fills all my ſoul for "your reſtored felicity, and your "rewarded merit. And you, Lord

"Belfort,

" Belfort, full of valour, and warm
" with principles of honour; go on
" and ſcorn the little gains of ſelf-
" enjoyment, when an emulation of
" the God, whoſe image it is you
" wear, prompts to the exerciſe of
" virtues, in the field of life. For
" in virtue only true nobility con-
" ſiſts, and ſelf approving conſcience
" calls it happineſs."

THE END.